



SEAWOLVES  
OF  
SEVEN SHORES  
JESSIE PEABODY  
FROTHINGHAM





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SEA-WOLVES  
OF SEVEN SHORES







Taking advantage of this accident, Blackbeard stepped back to cock his pistol

# SEA-WOLVES OF SEVEN SHORES

BY

JESSIE PEABODY FROTHINGHAM

AUTHOR OF "SEA FIGHTERS FROM DRAKE TO FARRAGUT"

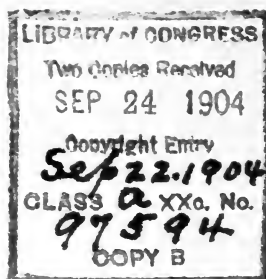
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# SEA-WOLVES OF SEVEN SHORES

## CHAPTER I

### THE HEROIC AGE OF PIRACY

[ IN the early days of history the part of pirate was played by men who were kings in their profession. They were conspicuous and brilliant figures in their time ; they had a superb and reckless daring, a certain imposing dignity and power, a courage and fire that took them out of the region of petty pirates and made them formidable and noted leaders, who claimed undisputed sway over the narrow seas, imposed their will with masterful arrogance, and held the fate of nations in their power.]

[These corsair kings now stand half shrouded by the romance of history and the romance of the sea, and the mists of romance produce very much the same effect as the mists of the mountains, — they blur details and magnify bulk. So that, as we look from afar at these great old sea-wolves, they take on a grandiose and heroic shape, and we admire them for their primitive qualities of strength

and size, just as we would admire the magnificent monarchs of the jungle. They had the courage, cunning, and cruelty of beasts of prey, and in addition they had some of the ablest and cleverest minds of their century. They were eminently successful men in their line, but would hardly have commended themselves to the humane societies of the twentieth century or to the modern methods of polite and bloodless piracy.]

[Almost every period in history has had its pirates, and the wide sea has always been the asylum of those who refuse to live under the law. Men of every race and nation, of every class and origin, have enrolled themselves under the black flag. For there never was a time when the love of freedom and unrestraint did not drive men to sail into the teeth of the gale, to battle with the tumult of the storm, to face death and win life against the wild fury of air and sky and water. And after that, as the Chinese rogues archly say, they had to live, so it was no wonder they took to pillage and plunder as the only way open to gain a livelihood. Thus freedom and freebooting became adopted brothers.]

[The waters that were later to cradle the greatest of all mediæval corsairs, the waters that wash the shores of Asia, Italy, and Greece, were even as far back as Roman times the home of a powerful band of sea-robbers. From all sides of the Empire men flocked to this floating republic. Their light-

footed, racing vessels — “sea-mice,” as they were called — sped hither and thither in pursuit of prey. So rich were their captures that they named their waters the “Golden Gulf.” They decked their prows with gold and purple and precious stuffs, and even their oars were plated with silver.

Every merchant ship that passed over their dominion paid blackmail or was looted. Egyptian, Greek, and Syrian galleys were chased and plundered. The coasts of Italy and Greece were pillaged, shipping was burned, and towns laid under ransom. Hundreds of cities were raided, and temples sacked. Large convoys of grain-ships were waylaid and plundered, and Rome starved.]

*The pirates* The pirates had a thousand ships, hidden deep among the secret harbors of the islands. Their nests lay among the crevices of the shores; their watch-towers were perched upon the cragged heights that rose abruptly from the water's edge; their fortresses stood on the steep and impracticable sides of the mountains; gorges, bogs, and torrents protected them from attack.

Strongly fortified in their retreats, they had more than once defied the fleets and armies of Rome that had in vain been sent out to exterminate them. It was not until the great Pompey with five hundred galleys, over a hundred thousand men, and an unlimited treasury, headed an expedition against these pirate-pests, that they were finally subdued and driven to surrender.]

{ In our own era, the Vikings, those titanic and primeval men of the North, sailed far and wide over the seas on piratical expeditions quite Walhallian in their scope, size, and strength. They spread to the south and west in search of new lands, and swept the shores of the Mediterranean, Africa, Sicily, Italy, and Greece. They stretched across the Atlantic to the coasts of a new continent. Their spirit of restless roving and adventure knew no bounds, and their voyages of conquest and plunder carried them into known and unknown waters.

Their ships were slender and fleet, pointed at each end, with gay-colored sails, painted sides, and armored prow. They were named in the poetic language of the North, "Deer of the Surf," "Raven of the Wind," "Snake of the Sea," "The Long Serpent," "The Gull of the Fjord." The ship of Harald Hardradi, one of the greatest of the Viking heroes, was "ornamented all over with gold above the water, and fine dragon-heads were on it, but the sail was of twofold velvet most splendidly woven. This ship was painted red, purple, and gold. All the weather-vanes looked as if they were of gold, as well as the beaks of the dragon-heads; inside were valiant men dressed in costly garments and velvet."

Those were splendid and gorgeous expeditions, never after equalled, that sailed from the shores of the North to the lands of the South and of the



Setting Sun; fleets three thousand ships strong, men valiant in battle, leaders of consummate skill and mighty deeds.]

[But if the battles of the giant Norsemen have never since been paralleled, we at least feel a closer interest in the great corsairs of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries who were the tyrants of Europe and whose heirs the United States, as a young nation, was the first to overthrow.]

The cradle and the grave of the heroic age of piracy in the Middle Ages lay in the waters of the Mediterranean, that fight-famed sea that has been the scene of more tragic and memorable conflicts than any other stretch of water in the world. It is the separating line between civilization and savagery, between the cross and the crescent, between Christianity and Moslemism. And in the century-old struggle of these two opposing powers, the great corsair sovereigns took at one time the chief part. In the days of the fierce Barbarossas of Barbary the Moorish and Turkish buccaneers held the balance of power and the naval preponderance in the Mediterranean.

[Little did Ferdinand and Isabella think, when they expelled the Moors from Spain, that they were giving birth to the "Scourge of Christendom." The wars of piracy that for three hundred years were to spread consternation over the whole of Europe began as a war of revenge against Spain. The fall of Granada, which was the clos-

ing scene in the drama of the Moor in Spain, became the opening scene in the wider drama of the Moslem in Africa.

An army of expatriated Mussulmans fled in an exodus from the hated Spanish rule, across the straits, to the neighboring shores of Barbary, and from the strongholds of the North African coast they carried on a war of vengeance and reprisals. But the Moor alone, for all his daring and skill, had not the strength to impose fear on the great nations of Europe. It was only when he joined his strength with that of the Turkish buccaneer that the Barbary corsair became a power to be reckoned with. This happened early in the fifteenth century. The war of revenge against Spain then turned into a war of depredation against Europe.

The corsair kings became a world-power. For three hundred years they held sway over the narrow seas and imposed their will on the nations of Christendom. Commerce was carried on or interrupted at their pleasure. They defied the fleets of Italy, England, Spain, and Holland; they spread terror along the coasts of the great maritime states; they levied tribute on all vessels that passed over the chief highway of trade.

One of the main reasons of their success lay in the impregnability of their lairs. The strip of land that forms the northern edge of the continent of Africa was the safest, the strongest, and

the largest covert ever devised by nature for the home of sea-wolves. With the straits of Gibraltar at one end, and those of Malta at the other, it commanded the two outlets of the Mediterranean, through which all vessels sailing to European ports or to the Levant were obliged to pass.

Riddled with natural harbors, inland lagoons, and hidden creeks, it offered endless means of escape and of refuge to the light-draught brigantines and galleys of the rovers. Rising abruptly from the coast, the steep mountains formed lookouts from which the corsairs could sweep the waters from end to end, and espy from afar the galleys of the Christians. Severe storms frequently raged along the coasts and drove ashore many prizes unfamiliar with the heavy tides and eddies of the enemy's waters. And the treacherous sandbanks caught more than one unwary and richly laden merchant vessel.

The corsairs, familiar with every creek and crevice of the coast, found broad and well-protected harbors for their pirate fleets, where few of the great war-galleys of Spain and Italy dared follow in pursuit. Fortresses of Roman and mediæval times defended the approaches. Jerba, of the Lotus-Eaters, the celebrated Goletta or "throat" of Tunis, Jijil the rocky stronghold, Bujeya made famous by the Barbarossas,—all these were ample and impregnable harbors of refuge for the buccaneers.]

With such natural advantages ready to their hand, it is no wonder that all the sea-robbers of the Moslem faith gathered under the safe and hospitable shelter of the African ports.

## CHAPTER II

### "RED-BEARD," THE CORSAIR KING

ON the island of Lesbos, in the Turkish archipelago, the ancient home of buccaneers, there lived, toward the close of the fifteenth century, a poor and hard-working potter. He was a Christian of the Greek Church, Jacob by name, and the father of two boys who were destined in after years to spread terror throughout the whole of Christendom. But as boys on the island of Lesbos the future Barbarossas worked industriously at their father's trade, helping him to support a large family of brothers and sisters.

Meanwhile, the eldest boy, as he shaped and moulded the potter's clay, dreamed of the delights of a free and roving life. His spirit was ever sweeping over the waves, longing to feel the wild turmoil of the storm, and to hear the roar of the angry waters. At last when he was twenty he broke loose from the shackles of work and poverty and ran away to sea. A small Turkish galley which had touched at a port on the island gave him the longed-for chance to sail the seas in search of adventure. His first act was to turn Mussul-

man, and with his new religion he received a new name, that of Urūj.

For ten years he scoured the narrow seas, each year adding to his reputation for daring, vigilance, and ambition. He had adopted piracy as a profession, and had won the respect and admiration of every corsair that roved the Mediterranean. His fame even reached the ear and the favor of certain Turkish merchants of Constantinople who were in the habit of combining commerce with buccaneering. These pirate-traders offered Urūj the captaincy of a newly built galleot, which was to be sent out on a filibustering expedition to raid and plunder all Christian merchant vessels that sailed to the Levant.

The chance was too fortunate to be neglected, and Urūj's fertile and ingenious brain saw opening before him a future which would be his, only for the taking, and would bring him the power and riches that he coveted. He accepted the offer, and even while he fitted out and manned his galleot he was secretly laying his plans to jilt his employers. Taking on board his two brothers and a crew of daring corsairs, he spread his canvas and sailed away toward the setting sun, never to return.

In mid-seas he confided his scheme to his fellow-adventurers, and it was received with enthusiastic cheers. With every sail set, he headed for the coast of Barbary, lured there by tales of rich booty that had fallen into the hands of the Moorish

pirates. On his way he overtook a galleot under the command of one of his comrades in piracy, and the two vessels, joining forces under the leadership of Urūj, turned their prows toward Tunis. This was in 1504, when Urūj was thirty years of age.

The king of Tunis received the corsairs with friendly hospitality, and allowed them free use of the port on condition that they would hand over to him one-tenth of all their booty. This arrangement gave the freebooters a strong base of operations, and a large and safe retreat for their galleys and prizes. It was a fortunate start in their new venture, and Urūj proved himself equal to his opportunity. From that hour the fame of Barbarossa, the “Red-Beard,” as he was now called, spread throughout Christendom. He was described by those who knew him as “a man excessively bold, resolute, daring, and enterprising,” and his first exploit certainly warranted the description.

Rumors of two richly laden papal galleys, bound from Genoa to Cività Vecchia, reached him at his newly established headquarters at the Goletta — the harbor of Tunis. At once he sped to the island of Elba, and there lay in waiting while the prizes rowed lazily and unsuspectingly into the snare. But even with the advantage of an ambush, it was no easy duel to match one small galley against two galleys-royal, and the cour-

age of Barbarossa's stout Turks began to waver. With one accord they remonstrated against the foolhardy attack and urged a retreat.

"Allah forbid that I should ever be branded with such infamy!" exclaimed the fiery corsair, his eyes glowing with resentment and indignation. To deprive the cowards of every means of escape he ordered the oars to be thrown overboard, and gave the signal for the attack. It was quick work. The first galley-royal, carelessly straying ahead of her consort with no thought of danger, had scarcely time to make ready for a hurried defence, when smart volleys of shot and arrows from the Turkish galleot threw the Christians into a panic. The galley-royal was boarded, the Christians were secured under the hatches, and the Turks dressed themselves in the clothes of their captives. Then manning the Pope's great galley and taking their own little galleot in tow as if she were a conquered prize, they waited with all apparent innocence for the consort to join them.

The audacious stratagem was successful, and the second galley-royal fell into the trap, an easy prey to the Turkish captain. The captive Christians were chained to the pirate oars, and Barbarossa could now reserve his entire crew for the battle instead of the bench.

This first bold stroke, which filled Europe with dismay, was followed by many others. Spanish ships were waylaid and brought captive to the



Goletta, new galleys were built out of their timber, the coasts of Italy, Sicily, and Calabria were ravaged, and no trading-vessel could stir out of port without danger of being looted. Urūj became rich and prosperous and before long outgrew his haunts; in five years the harbor of Tunis was no longer large enough to shelter the ever increasing pirate squadron.

In 1510 the now notorious corsair changed his headquarters to the island of Jerba. So far success had followed him at every step. He was popular as a leader, vigorous, liberal, and magnanimous; his energy and spirit were contagious, and inspired his followers to fight to the death. An old chronicler, speaking of his personal appearance, says, "He was not very tall of stature, but extremely well-set and robust; his hair perfectly red; his eyes quick, sparkling, and lively."

A change of lair brought, however, a change of luck, and his first reverse was received at the hands of the Spaniards. In 1512, with twelve armed galleots, and one thousand fighting men, he went to the assistance of the exiled king of Bujeya, who had been dispossessed by the Spaniards and forced to wander for three years through mountain fastnesses and to seek shelter among the free African mountaineers.

On a day in August the corsair fleet suddenly appeared before Bujeya. Landing his troops and artillery, Barbarossa joined forces with the king

and his three thousand mountaineers, and opened a furious cannonading on the Spanish fort. After eight days a large breach was made, and Barbarossa confidently led his men to the attack. But on the very threshold of success he received a severe wound, his left arm being shot off above the elbow. Deprived of the leadership of their reckless and beloved commander, his followers lost heart, and all attempt to carry on the expedition was given up. The wounded Urūj was taken back to Tunis, there to lie on a sick-bed until his arm should heal; his brother Kheyr-ed-din was placed in command, and the pirate fleet was dismantled, and moored in their old harbor at the Goletta.

News of the corsair's movements had not failed to reach the ears of the incensed Senate of Genoa, whose rich galleys had more than once fallen a prey to the depredations of Barbarossa. Andrea Doria, the great Genoese admiral, was sent with twelve war-galleys to capture the common enemy. Arriving unexpectedly before the harbor of Tunis, he landed a large force of men within gunshot of the Goletta, his vessels following close alongshore. Taken entirely by surprise, Kheyr-ed-din sunk six of his own pirate galleys to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy, and at the head of his Turkish soldiers led a desperate sally from the fort. But his small force was soon overpowered by the superior numbers of his assailants. Caught between the fire of the land artillery and

the batteries of the ships, the Turkish soldiers were seized with panic, and taking to their heels they fled toward Tunis. Doria took the Goletta by storm, and sailed away with six captured galleots and several of the pirate prizes to grace his victory.

Lying helpless upon his sick-bed, Urūj received the news of his brother's defeat with rage and indignation. His fiery and vehement spirit rose in wrath and rebellion against what he chose to consider as cowardice and incapacity. Kheyr-ed-din, afraid to face his brother's stormy displeasure, fled to Jerba. There, with diligence and devotion, he hoped to appease his lion brother's ire and win back his good opinion; and working with incredible energy, he, in a short while, built and fitted out several fine new galleots.

Meanwhile Urūj had recovered from his wound, and he now joined his younger brother at Jerba. Together they worked and prepared for their revenge. The whole of the following year was spent in building galleots, making powder, fitting out the fleet, and gathering men, arms, and provisions.

In the summer of 1514 the brothers started out on a second expedition to capture Bujeya and reinstate the former king. A gallant little fleet of twelve galleots, well armed and carrying over a thousand men, appeared before the city. At first everything seemed to promise success. Urūj

turned his batteries on the fort and soon levelled it to the ground. He next made a large breach in a newly built bastion which stood by the water's edge. But his unlucky star seemed to shine over this city of Bujeya.

With victory almost in his grasp, five large men-of-war from Spain appeared suddenly in the offing. Even this strong reënforcement for the enemy would not have turned Urūj from his purpose, had not his allies the mountaineers begun to desert him. One by one they slunk away to their homes, to plough their fields and sow their crops. Deserted by his friends, Barbarossa raised the siege and retreated out to sea.

Then in his rage and disappointment, the baffled corsair tore his beard, and vowed a mighty vow that their old haunts should see them no more, but that in a new lair they would begin their pirate life afresh and redeem their dishonored name. At Jijil, an independent seaport town twenty leagues from Bujeya, Barbarossa sought refuge, and from this new base of operations, during the whole of the fall and winter, sallied out on a series of successful cruises for plunder.

Prizes and spoils were brought back in plenty, greatly to the delight of the hardy African mountaineers. These free and wild highland natives, who had never given their allegiance to any of the kings of Tunis, now became so captivated

by the generosity of Barbarossa that of their own accord they proclaimed him their sultan. Gradually Urūj was seeing the fulfilment of his dearest dream and highest ambition, that of becoming the king of an independent state.

Not long after the assumption of his new honors, the corsair sultan was called to fresh exploits in a new field. The Moors of Algeria, exiled from their early home among the mountains of Spain, had been crushed under the Spanish yoke, which had followed them and fettered them in their adopted country. In 1516 Ferdinand the Catholic died, and the Moors felt that the time was ripe for a strike for freedom. The neighboring Arabian sheik Salim was elected sultan of Algiers, and ambassadors were sent to the powerful corsair Barbarossa to implore his aid in freeing their city from the Spaniards.

Shrewd as well as brave, a politician quite as much as a soldier, Urūj was not slow to answer the appeal. With six thousand men and sixteen galleots he started on what was ostensibly a relief expedition, but in reality a voyage of conquest. For he cherished no less an ambition than to make himself, by might of arm, king of the Barbary States. And was not this the opening wedge?

On his voyage to Algiers he tarried by the way to punish a bold and dangerous rival, the corsair Kara Hassan, who had set up his sceptre at Sher-

shel and bade fair to grow in power and success. With a greatly superior force, Urūj appeared suddenly before Shershel, intimidated the corsairs, took possession of the city, ordered the head of his rival Hassan to be cut off, and himself proclaimed king. This done, he hastened to Algiers, where he was received with every demonstration of joy and gratitude, and was sumptuously entertained.

At first all went well, and Urūj zealously plied his guns against the Spanish fort. But before long the Moors discovered that they had called in a despot more iron-willed and haughty than even their former master, and that the corsair who had comfortably established himself and his Turks at Algiers was not likely to depart. Their worst fears were, in fact, soon realized. Ambition had grown to be Urūj's ruling passion, and covetous of the fair city of Algiers, he was determined to be its master. The unfortunate Salim was entrapped and murdered, and Barbarossa rode in triumph through the streets of the city, among the affrighted populace, while his Turks proclaimed him sultan.

Forced to acknowledge the Red-Beard as their sovereign, the Moors of Algiers submitted for a time to their pirate conquerors. But while outwardly resigned, they inwardly fretted against the insolence and oppression of the Turks, and were resolved to free themselves from what had become an intolerable tyranny. Terrified by the Turks, secretly receiving promises of help

from Spain, the Moors leagued themselves with the Spaniards, their former oppressors, and with the Arabs, and rose in rebellion.

A vast conspiracy was formed; the details were carefully planned, and a clever scheme of attack laid out; everything promised to be successful. But in some way Barbarossa received minute information of the whole affair. Instead of being taken by surprise, Urūj, by a masterly counter-plot, turned the scales against the confederates. The ringleaders were seized in the mosque and quickly despatched, as an example to the rest of the conspirators, and the mob, losing courage, meekly submitted.

This complete crushing of the threatened revolution, and the annihilation, in 1517, of a large Spanish squadron under the command of Don Diego de Vera, sent to the assistance of the Algerines, firmly established the power of Barbarossa in Algiers. His empire spread over the whole of the neighboring country, and it was not long before he found himself sultan of Middle Barbary. The independent towns of Tennez and Tremizan fell into his hands, Moors and Arabs flocked to his standard, and his galleots swept the blue waters of the Mediterranean, bringing in fabulous cargoes from the coasts of Spain and Italy.

But the hour of reckoning was on the swift approach. At the very time that Barbarossa had reached the height of his power, the new king of

Spain, afterward Emperor Charles V, landed in the Bay of Biscay to take possession of his new dominions. The first act of the young monarch was to send a powerful expedition of ten thousand veterans under the leadership of the Marquis de Comarès to break the ever increasing and dangerous power of the corsair tyrant.

When the marquis landed on African soil, Barbarossa was still at Tremizan, having but lately been installed as king. He had with him only fifteen hundred Turks, and five thousand Moors in whose loyalty he had little confidence. Tremizan was defenceless, and the Spaniards had already almost reached its gates. Taken at so great a disadvantage, Barbarossa fled by night with his Turks and his treasure and attempted to reach Algiers. But the marquis, encamped at no great distance, received news of his escape and followed in hot chase. The corsair had only a short start, and before daybreak he heard the tramp of the enemy's horses. Every moment shortened the distance between pursuer and pursued.

Although little hope was left, there was still one chance of escape. Not far ahead a river crossed their path, and if the troops could succeed in fording it before the Spaniards attacked them, they might still be saved. Counting on the cupidity of the Spaniards, Barbarossa, as a last stratagem, scattered his treasure on the ground. Gold and silver and sparkling jewels lay enticingly along



the road. Would the pursuers tarry for the spoils? Their lives hung on that question.

But love of revenge proved stronger than love of gold, and galloping headlong over the glittering and tempting display, with scarcely a glance at the wealth under their feet, the Spaniards caught up with the rear of the retreating enemy. Barbarossa, with half of his force, had already forded the river and reached the other side, when the quick firing and the clash of arms told him that his Turks had been caught. Seeing that his faithful followers were hard pressed and no match for the overwhelming numbers of the attacking column, he turned on his steps, recrossed the stream, and faced death with his men.

Leading his band to a slight rise in the ground, he took a resolute stand and determined to die hard. Blows fell on every side. “Barbarossa, though he had but one arm,” writes an old Spanish historian, “fought to the very last gasp like a lion.” It was a fierce and desperate struggle, hopeless from the first. What could a few hundred do against thousands? One by one they were cut down until scarcely a man was left. And so died the intrepid Red-Beard, of a gallant and generous death.

He was only forty-four when he died, still in the fulness of his power and fame. Bold, ambitious, liberal, loved by his soldiers, dreaded by his enemies, he was faithful to his friends, and cruel

only to those who opposed him. His rugged and vigorous greatness commanded the respect and admiration of both his followers and his antagonists. "He was highly beloved, feared and respected by his soldiers, and when dead was by them all in general most bitterly regretted and lamented."

## CHAPTER III

### “THE CHIEF OF THE SEA”

THE fate of the Barbary corsairs hung for a moment in the balance. Urūj, the dashing soldier and reckless leader, was dead. Comarès, with his ten thousand Spanish veterans, was on the road to Algiers. A rapid march and sweeping attack, Algiers undefended and unprepared, its people filled with dismay, surely the power of the pirates must be at an end. At this moment of peril Kheyr-ed-din, the younger brother, was unanimously chosen by the Turks as their king and captain. Realizing the impossibility of holding Algiers against the enemy, the new chief hastily made preparations to embark with all his men and treasure on the twenty-two large galleots that formed his squadron.

Ready at a moment's notice to sail away forever from his old haunts, Kheyr-ed-din waited for news of the marquis. His surprise, then, could only be equalled by the astonishment of the entire civilized world, when it was learned that Comarès had shipped his veterans back to Spain. Thus the chance to ruin the powerful corsairs was lost for three hundred years to come.

Left unmolested and in full possession of his beloved coast, Kheyr-ed-din, the second Barbarossa, now laid his plans for new conquests and for winning that reputation and greatness which was to outshine even his elder brother's fame. His first act was to send a deputation to Constantinople with rich presents and a letter to the Grand Signior, assuring him of his humble devotion and asking for the protection of the Ottoman Empire. The embassy was successful. The Sultan not only appointed Barbarossa viceroy of Algiers, but sent a force of two thousand picked Janissaries to help in the conquest of the rest of Barbary.

The new viceroy began at once to reënforce his garrisons along the coast and to form alliances with the Arab chiefs. He so well strengthened his position that when Don Hugo de Moncada brought over a large fleet of more than thirty ships, eight galleys-royal, and many thousand veterans, Barbarossa easily routed the entire force, and a fierce storm completed the destruction of the ships.

One by one the independent Barbary strongholds along the coast fell into his hands, and many Turkish rovers, hearing of his fame, flocked to his standard. With captains like Sâlih Reïs and "Drub-Devil" to lead his eighteen stout galleots on their summer cruises along the coasts of the Mediterranean, it is no wonder that the world rang with the name of the "Scourge of Christen-

dom." The Barbary corsairs were undisputed masters of the narrow sea; they held the highway of trade from Spain to Italy and even to the Indies; not a vessel but had to run the gantlet of the pirate coast; not a cargo of gold and jewels but was doomed to fall a prey to the strong freebooters.

Col and Bona and Constantina on the African coast gave him allegiance. A descent upon the Balearic Islands ended in a brilliant victory over General Portundo and his eight Spanish galleys, and a rich harvest of captives and prizes.

With his growing successes Kheyr-ed-din at last felt strong enough to rid himself of the Spanish garrison and the Spanish fort at Algiers, which had given him constant annoyance. The only moorage for his galleots was a mile west of the town; the only anchorage for trading-vessels lay down to the east. He was now determined to be complete master of his own harbor.

First, as a formality, he summoned the Spanish captain, Don Martin de Vargas, to surrender, and offered him safe-conduct from the fort. This was haughtily refused, and Barbarossa then opened fire on the Peñon. For fifteen days the heavy cannonading was kept up, the gallant Spaniards holding out to the last with wonderful pluck. But the breach daily increased, and a swift assault carried the fort. The fortress was razed to the ground and the stones were used to build the

great western mole of the harbor of Algiers. A fortnight later, when nine transports arrived with troops to reënforce the garrison, not a vestige of the former fort was left.

While Barbarossa had firmly established himself as master of the western Mediterranean, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire had, by the capture of Rhodes, completed his dominion over the eastern basin of the Mediterranean. Suleyman the Magnificent, himself a genius, appreciated the genius of Barbarossa, and his astute mind foresaw the advantage of linking together more closely the two great Mussulman powers of the inland sea. He had seen the invincible corsair triumph over every adversary, even the redoubtable Andrea Doria, who was reckoned the greatest of Christian admirals. For had not Doria, with twenty galleys, sailed across to Shershel in 1531, and, failing in his enterprise, returned discomfited? If Barbarossa could triumph over Doria, he must be the man whom Suleyman most desired. An imperial order called him to Constantinople.

The rough sea-dog and arch-corsair now enters on a new field. At the ripe age of seventy-one, his beard hoary, his face still resolute but furrowed and weather-beaten, his eyes piercing, his figure vigorous,—furious and sagacious, daring and prudent,—the grand old pirate, the chief of Moslem captains, turns his face from Barbary, enters the service of Suleyman the Magnificent, and is placed

at the head of the Ottoman navy. This marks the preponderance of Turkish power on the sea.

Sailing into the Golden Horn with his fleet of eighteen galleots and fourteen brigantines, the veteran Barbarossa was received with joy by the Sultan, and with a mingled respect and curiosity by the generals and courtiers of the Porte. Appointed at once to the highest rank in the navy, Barbarossa spent the entire winter of 1533 in the work of reconstruction. All was life and bustle at the dockyards. Reforms in building, in navigation, in the whole working system of the marine, brought about marvellous changes. By the spring sixty-one new galleys were ready to take the sea.

These energetic preparations pointed to a fresh enterprise, so it need hardly surprise us to see Barbarossa sail away in the early summer with a fleet of eighty-four vessels and head for the Goletta. The kingdom of Tunis was the destined prey. Swiftly and silently the artillery and forces were landed, and ten thousand soldiers marched on Tunis. The attack was so sudden that Mulei Hassan, the king of Tunis, wholly unprepared, detested by his subjects, and a coward at best, fled in haste to his Arab allies. Barbarossa walked into Tunis and hoisted the Ottoman flag.

But the exchange of sovereignty was not to last for long. Feeling secure in his new acquisition, Barbarossa dismissed the larger part of the galleys

and Janissaries, reserving only eight thousand Turks and his own galleots. The fort of the Goletta was strengthened and garrisoned, and little did the successful corsair dream that with a turn of fortune he was to walk out of Tunis as quickly as he had walked in.

Charles V was not blind to the danger of leaving Tunis to become a nest of pirates. Already they were perched along every crag of the African coast. Tunis, at least, must be saved. From Barcelona harbor, on a day in May, 1535, an armada of six hundred ships and the flower of the imperial army set sail, under the great Doria, for the key of the Mediterranean. The heavy cannon of the *St. Ann*, the great carack of the Knights of Malta, soon made a breach in the fort of the Goletta, and the Knights rushed in. Barbarossa, at the head of his troops, led a sortie from the town, but his Turks gave way before the hordes of imperialists, the gates of the city were treacherously closed against him, and the corsair was forced to retreat to Bona, where his ships lay in waiting to carry him to Algiers.

Barbarossa had been defeated, his first defeat since the mantle of his brother had fallen upon his shoulders, but he was not of the mettle to lose time in vain regret. While the imperial soldiery were still given over to plunder and massacre in the streets of unhappy Tunis, Barbarossa sped across the waters with his eighteen galleots, and



hoisting Spanish and Italian colors, made for the island of Minorca. No one could suspect that the corsair was roaming the sea while Tunis lay besieged, and Barbarossa, after an easy raid, sailed back to Algiers laden with rich booty and many captives.

Tunis had been taken, the former king reinstated, and the armada, as usual, sailed back to Spain. Barbarossa, left unmolested at Algiers, returned to Constantinople to take up fresh work for the Sultan. The ambition of Suleyman led him to covet the supremacy of the Adriatic as well as that of the Mediterranean. In May, 1537, Barbarossa set sail with one hundred and thirty-five galleys, laid waste the coasts of Dalmatia and Apulia, captured strongholds, devastated Calabria, sacked Fundi, and spread consternation as far as Rome.

An order from Suleyman carried him to Corfù. In storm and rain he besieged the castle with fifty thousand men and thirty cannon. But the Turks were poor marksmen, while the guns of the castle were worked with fearful precision. In September the siege was raised.

Unwilling to return to Constantinople with empty hands, Barbarossa swept the Adriatic and the archipelago with his devastating fleet. In and out among the islands he raced; towns were burnt, forts captured, thousands of people carried away captive, and countless treasure borne off in tri-

umph to fill the vessels' holds. It was a raid in true corsair style. And when the high-admiral sailed into the Golden Horn, it was with golden riches that filled the coffers of the Sultan, of the State, and of Barbarossa himself.

Twenty-five islands had now transferred their allegiance from Venice to the Crescent. This was a good beginning toward the undoing of the naval power of the Venetian Republic. But Suleyman was not satisfied, neither was Barbarossa. Again putting off to sea in the summer of 1538, the high-admiral sailed, with one hundred and fifty ships of war, in search of the great united fleet of the Emperor, Venice, and the Pope. This formidable armament, under the command of Doria, counted no less than two hundred sail, sixty thousand soldiers, and twenty-five hundred guns.

Boldly Barbarossa took his way up the Adriatic. Reaching Prevesa, and the united fleet being still out of sight, he slipped nimbly into the ample Gulf of Arta, and there awaited events.

Then came the famous failure. The two great masters of the sea who had chased each other up and down the narrow waters, and had rarely met, now sat face to face with their mighty armaments. Fifty years earlier there would have been a great battle, one to have gone down in history as the famous duel between two renowned sea-kings. But both were old; prudence had replaced daring. Both had a great reputation

to lose, and at eighty a name lost can scarcely be regained. So Barbarossa lay within, and Doria lay without the gulf, and neither moved. Warily they watched, but the stakes were too high. And then, after two days of silent eying, the majestic navy of Europe sailed away.

Then all was astir on the Turkish vessels. Dragut was there, and Sinān the Jew, and Sālīh Reīs ; their hot, impatient blood could not be held in check. Out they rushed in full pursuit. Galleys, galleots, and brigantines bore down before the wind. The Venetian wing was fiercely engaged, galleons were burnt or lay unrigged and helmless. But still Doria kept aloof, tacking and manœuvring. And in the evening he made sail for Corfù, and the day was lost. Again the Turks could add another signal victory for the Crescent.

Although Barbarossa was an old man, his energy had in no way deserted him. Every line of his face tells that he would be a fighter till his death. His fleet still scoured the sea. Town after town was captured from the Venetians. Cataro was reduced ; Napoli di Malvasia and Napoli di Romania were ceded ; and Castelnovo, after a furious cannonading which lasted three weeks and pelted the city with thirteen thousand shot, surrendered to the conqueror. And so with fallen places scattered along his way, Barbarossa entered upon his last campaign.

The “impious alliance,” as it has been called,

between France and Turkey was levelled at the head of Charles V. To the mind of Francis I any expedient seemed allowable, even to a union with the inveterate foe of Christendom, in order to crush the power of the German Emperor. In 1543 Barbarossa, the freebooter and high-admiral of the Crescent, brought one hundred and fifty ships to Marseilles. On his way he had pillaged the coast of Calabria, raided Reggio, threatened Cività Vecchia, and then, with colors flying gayly on the breeze, he rounded up in the Gulf of Lyons.

There he found indecision, fear, and want of energy. He found his timorous ally already anxious to cancel the bargain. For the undisguised indignation of all the nations of Europe, at an alliance with the "Scourge of Christendom," had shaken the wavering will of Francis I.

Barbarossa tore his beard in fury at having made so long a voyage and all to no purpose. With unappeasable anger he paced his deck, declaring that he would not be made a plaything and a laughing-stock by man or monarch. He who had led his ships without let or hindrance wheresoever he willed was not to be chained to inaction for the whims of another.

To appease his fury he was commanded to bombard Nice, the "Gate of Italy," and he found a vent for his wrath by letting fly a storm of shot and projectiles upon the walls of the city. A landing was made at the harbor of Ville-Franche,

and a forced march brought the troops and artillery within sight of the beautiful city of the South. Swiftly and dextrously the Turks pitched their camp and opened fire on the fort, greatly to the surprise of their allies the French, who watched with undisguised admiration the precision of the Ottomans' aim. After a few hours of fierce cannonading, two great towers were destroyed and a breach made, through which the besiegers rushed in. The city surrendered on honorable terms, while the castle still held out.

Again Barbarossa opened his batteries with good effect, but the fortress was defended by one of the corsairs' inveterate foes, a Knight of Malta, one of the invincibles who never surrendered. An intercepted message told also of the quick arrival of an army of relief for the besieged, sent by Charles V. This alarmed the Turkish camp. Even the skies seemed in league with the Christians, for a fierce storm burst over the besiegers and added to the terrors of the night. A general panic seized the Turks; they retreated in every direction. French and Turks alike were filled with distrust and fear. The “impious alliance” was reaping its own reward.

The army had lost its nerve; it was useless to tempt fortune. The camp was broken up, the campaign brought to an inglorious end, and the ships hoisted sail for Marseilles and Toulon. On the way news came that Doria was cruising in the

western Mediterranean. A favorable wind, or a favorable desire, would have brought them together to fight out, in their old age, their lifelong quarrel. But no; for one alleged reason or another they seemed still unwilling to hunt each other down. Was it lack of daring? Was it the wish, pardonable perhaps, that each nourished to carry his glory undimmed to the grave? Neither wanted to be beaten by his rival. Or was their rivalry a generous one, and did they feel that they could afford to divide the crown of their proud sea-realm? Both ended their days without the dishonor of failure, unless prudence is a failure.

Barbarossa wintered his fleet in the fair harbor of Toulon. It was not a happy season for the city of the South. The Turks were troublesome friends, and levied irksome duties on the unwilling inhabitants. This useless expedition cost France her millions, and, worse still, the Turkish press-gang carried off men by the hundreds to be chained to the corsairs' oars, and boys by the thousands to grace the Sultan's palace. Monthly, the French king paid fifty thousand ducats to his importunate ally. The treasury of France suffered greatly, and the dignity of France suffered still more.

Summer came at last, and the people of Toulon saw with joy the Turkish ships sailing out of their beloved harbor. Barbarossa, putting out to sea at his leisure, carried with him the riches of France, jewellery, silks, and fine linen, cloth of scarlet, and

captives for the harems. Laden with such gifts, and enriching himself on his homeward course by raids along the coast of Italy and among islands of the Mediterranean, he returned to the Bosphorus.

The career of the great sea-king was drawing to a close. Steeled to every hardship, impulsive, masterful, sagacious, with unequalled knowledge of the sea, Barbarossa died in 1546 at the advanced age of eighty-five. "The chief of the sea is dead," was the Arabic saying.

For more than two hundred years no fleet left the Golden Horn and no vessel set sail on its voyage without a prayer being said and a salute fired at the tomb of the famous Barbarossa, near the mouth of the Black Sea.

## CHAPTER IV

### A ROMANTIC ROBBER

AMONG the redoubtable corsairs who served under Kheyr-ed-din Barbarossa, none had so romantic a career or so original a character as Dragut. Born on the shores of Asia Minor, opposite the island of Rhodes, his parents were poor peasant-farmers, professing the faith of Mohammed. The spirit of adventure, which was born in him, showed itself early. When only twelve years old he entered the service of a master-gunner in the Turkish fleet, and under his tuition became a good pilot and a practised gunner. Soon he bought a share in a cruising brigantine, and not long afterward we find him master of a galleot and a successful pirate of the eastern Mediterranean. His fame as a freebooter grew apace, and carried his name as far as Algiers, where Barbarossa reigned supreme.

With as much wisdom as daring, Dragut sailed across to the great monarch of the Barbary coast to lay his respects and his services at the feet of one whom every sagacious corsair owned as master. Kheyr-ed-din gave him a hearty welcome, made him his lieutenant, and appointed him to the command of twelve galleots. From that moment the



coasts of Spain and Italy learned to dread the name of Dragut, and every vessel that stole out of harbor looked timorously at the horizon for the corsair's sails.

Charles V, weary of this pest who was as agile in slipping out of harm's way as he was swift in swooping down upon his prey, ordered his admiral, Andrea Doria, to hunt the corsair down. Doria promptly fitted out a fleet and gave the command to his nephew Giannettino.

Ignorant of what was in store for him, Dragut, with his thirteen galleots, lay in the road of Girallatta, under the coast of Corsica. Suddenly a great fleet hove in sight, hemmed him in on all sides, and peppered him with a hail-storm of shot. Dragut did not relish being cooped up and cannonaded in a narrow roadstead, so he sailed boldly out to face the enemy. He made a good fight but was overpowered by numbers; and as he could neither retreat nor win, his only choice was to surrender. Led in chains to the benches of Doria's galley, he served his time with the meanest slaves and the foulest ruffians, bending his back under the lash and straining his sore muscles at the galley-oar.

Four years he waited for his release. At last Barbarossa sailed with a hundred galleys to Genoa and demanded the freedom of his friend, agreeing to pay a ransom of three thousand ducats. Kheyr-ed-din was not a man to be played with. Dragut

was given up, and promptly Barbarossa handed him a commission as general-in-chief of all the western corsairs. "Dragut is braver than I," said Barbarossa, with magnanimity.

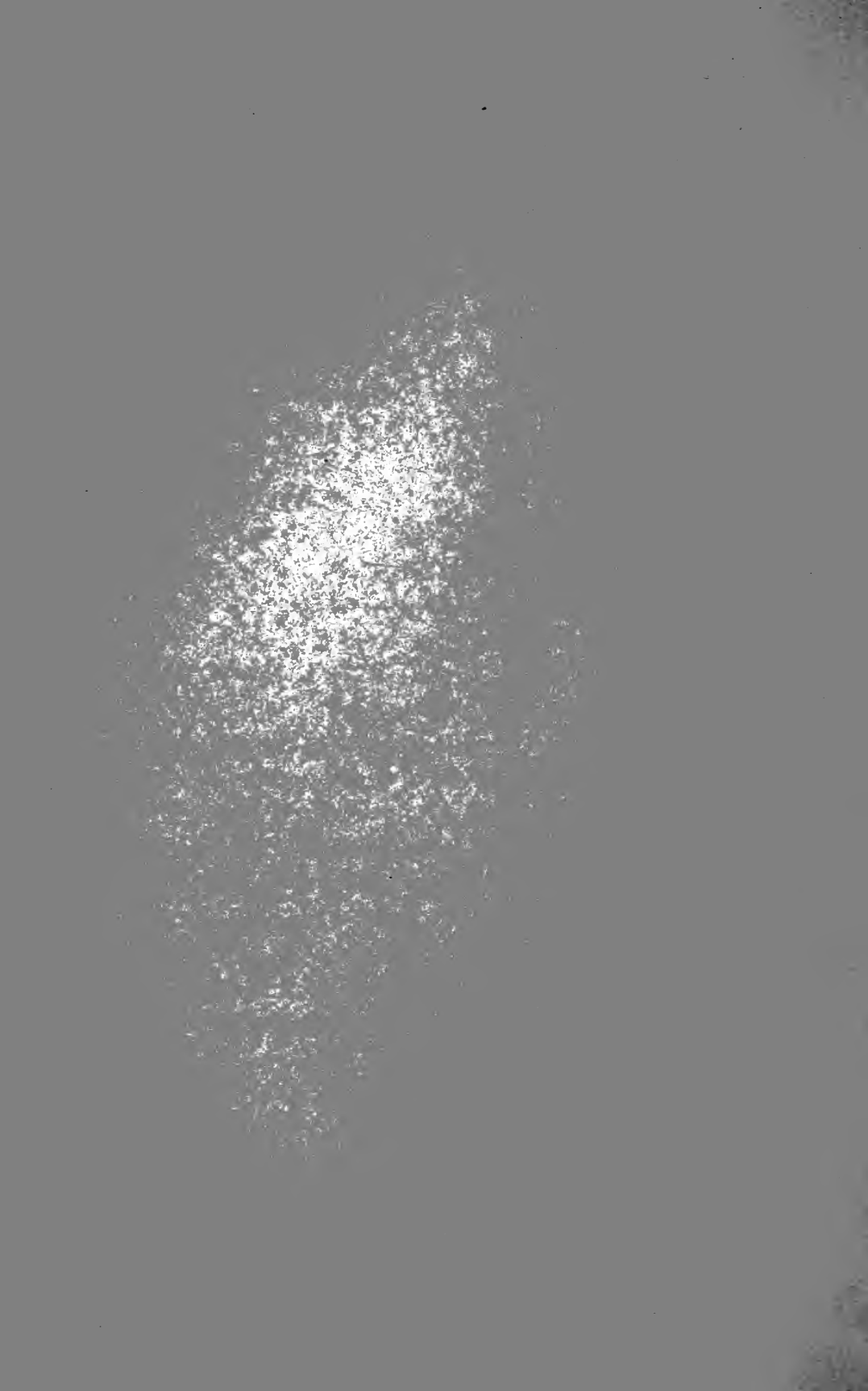
No sooner had Dragut regained his liberty than he took to his old habits with even keener zest since his captivity. The coasts of Italy again learned to know and fear him. The Knights of Malta also learned to know him, and lost one of their fine galleys with seventy thousand ducats on board.

In four years Dragut was master of an independent fleet of twenty-six vessels. His lair was at the old home of the first Barbarossa, the island of Jerba; but not content with this limited domain, he seized one by one the strongholds along the coast. Susa fell into his hands, then Sfax, then Monastir. He next laid his plans for the conquest of the ancient and famous city of "Africa" or Mahdiya.

This important and strongly fortified city was built on a tongue of land that jutted out into the sea several leagues east of Tunis. It was just such a retreat as would suit a pirate's needs. Not only was there a large and safe harbor, but there was also a small and convenient port for galleys. The fortifications were of unusual strength; towers, bulwarks, and walls rose to a great height, their foundations washed by the sea. On a hill commanding the city loomed a large fortress.



Dragut led in chains to the benches of Doria's galley



But if this would prove an impregnable retreat for pirate galleys, it would also be a formidable stronghold to capture. The independent Moors who ruled it allowed neither Turk nor Christian within its walls. A powerful Christian armament had failed, two hundred years earlier, to subdue the city, and now it seemed rash and futile for the corsairs with their limited numbers to attempt an assault.

But where force was useless, strategy might prevail. Dragut made friendly overtures to one of the leading Moors of the city, and spared neither gifts nor promises of future wealth to win his confidence. Having thus gained a confederate within the very walls of Africa, he trusted his fame and his life to his new ally.

One dark night, a squadron of galleys, well manned and fully equipped, stole noiselessly under the walls of the sleeping city. None knew of it save the traitor Ibrahim. Then through a dark, subterranean passage stealthy forms crept silently along. Not a sound, scarcely a breath, was heard.

Suddenly at daybreak the people were rudely startled from their sleep by the blare of trumpets. Several hundred freebooters with Dragut at their head held the heart of the city. The people flew to arms. But hurry and confusion gave them no chance to marshal their ranks. Their impetuous onslaught was soon overcome and the corsairs were masters of the place. Then Dragut, impa-

tient to be speeding over the waves once more, appointed his nephew, the bold young Hisār Reïs, governor of the city, and set out on one of his cruises.

The capture of Africa alarmed Charles V. He knew the strength and importance of the place. Dragut, firmly established at this stout base of operations, would grow to be a yet more formidable opponent. At all costs Africa must be reconquered.

Andrea Doria had for several months been cruising in the waters of the Mediterranean with forty-three galleys-royal in a fruitless search for the wily corsair. Meanwhile, Dragut, with half that number of galleots, ravaged the coasts. One of the first lessons a pirate learns is never to be caught. Day by day Doria heard news of the corsair's raids, but never could he put his finger on him. After his early experience at the galley-bench of the Christians, Dragut was not likely to be taken again, and now he played hide-and-seek with his rival all over the waters of the Mediterranean.

Not until June, 1550, did Doria at last round up at Africa, but it was with a strong addition to his fleet. A squadron from Naples and one from Malta brought the number of ships to over eighty. The batteries were opened on the city walls, and the Christian leaders settled down for a long siege.

The cannonading had been kept up without effect for a month, when Dragut slipped in unannounced. Under cover of a dark night he landed several thousand Moors, crept to within a few miles of the city, and lay in ambush in a forest of olive trees. At a given signal his nephew was to make a desperate sally from the city.

It was well planned, but the besiegers got word of the plot and were prepared. After a long and obstinate struggle Dragut and his men were repulsed and retreated to their galleys. Meanwhile, scarcely a breach had been made in the stout city walls, but a traitor was found to tell of the only weak spot in the fortifications. The batteries were trained on that point and soon the walls were shattered. Bullets and arrows fell like a storm of hail in the city, and the fire on both sides was so furious that it seemed like a fearful storm of lightning.

But no efforts could save the city, and after a gallant stand the people fled to the mountains, or to the forests, or the ships. An immense booty of gold, silver, and precious stones fell into the hands of the Christians.

Again Dragut sped back to Jerba and busied himself with refitting his squadron. He had brought in a fresh relay of ships from his last cruises, and lay there calmly "greasing his keels" in the narrow straits which connect the sea with the great lake behind the island. His merry men

all had their sleeves turned up and were singing and cracking jokes, when — they rubbed their eyes for very wonder — there lay Doria and his fleet at the mouth of the straits.

“Caught in a trap!” So cried Doria triumphantly. Twenty-two galleys-royal, besides galleots and brigantines, cut off all escape at the north. On the south the shores of the lake formed an impassable bog. Doria sat down leisurely to gloat over his expected and inevitable victory.

The wary and inventive Dragut, meanwhile, was not inactive. With great bustle and display, he set up a bastion and started a brisk fire on the enemy’s galleys. Then, under cover of the night, and while Doria was kept busy with the cannonading, he gathered several thousand workmen and set them at digging a channel from the south side of the lake to the open water. What was this clever trick he was devising? Any one looking into the silent but active camp would have been truly perplexed. Slaves and Turks, rafts and rollers, and tallowed planks were all brought into play; galleys were hoisted up and one by one rolled overland; brigantines were slipped along the greased pathway. It seemed like some mysterious game, for the pirates flew here and there with a half-amused smile, as if there were some great joke in the air.

Doria, gravely lying with all his fleet at the mouth of the straits, with his foe bottled up



inside, knew nothing of these strange proceedings. But one morning he awoke with a start. Not a pirate ship was in sight, not a living being on the bastion, not a breath or a stir in the Turkish camp.

Dragut with all his men and all his ships had flown, slipped through his fingers in the most insolent manner, skipped out of a back passage, and gone careering over the seas to Jerba, picking up on the way a Sicilian galley and a few other prizes. Was there ever anything so maddening?

Though Dragut had escaped, he no longer felt a strong liking for the coast of Africa, and he decided to try his fortunes in other scenes. The following year, 1551, found him at Constantinople, where he joined his forces to the Ottoman fleet. Some great enterprise was on foot, to judge by the preparations at the Dardanelles and the activity at the arsenals, but whatever it was the secret was rigorously kept. Then one fair morning one hundred and fifty galleys, ten thousand soldiers, and many siege-guns set sail with Sinān Pasha as head admiral, and Dragut chief adviser. By the Sultan's orders no step was to be taken without the corsair's knowledge and approval.

All the world knew the object of the expedition when the fleet cast anchor under the island of Malta. The Knights of St. John had been to the Sublime Porte what the Barbarossas and Dragut had been to Christian Europe, a thorn in the flesh.

Their destruction was the chief desire of Suleyman, and the dearest wish of Dragut.

In July, 1551, the Turkish fleet sighted Malta, that arid island-rock, the last refuge of the Knights and the outpost of Christianity. This then was the stronghold which Dragut had represented as being so easily taken. To see the Knights, his inveterate enemies, hunted out of their refuge was dear to his heart. He had often studied their fortifications, and in his desire to urge the Turk into active measures, had underrated them.

Filled with awe and dismay, Sinān Pasha stood before the formidable castle of St. Angelo. "Certainly no eagle could have chosen a less accessible rock to have built his nest upon!" he cried angrily to Dragut. To start a siege with a mingling of dread and "lukewarmness" was of course to court failure at the start. Sinān decided to destroy as much of the fortifications as possible, and then move on to Tripoli, which he had received orders to take. We can realize how Dragut must have chafed and fretted under this prudent policy. With no feeling of fear, or dread of danger, the corsair longed to make a dashing attack and carry the place by assault.

On the narrow promontory of land which juts out into the sea, Sinān landed fifteen hundred Janissaries. The admiral then boarded his flagship and with several other galleys advanced toward the harbor. Suddenly a furious volley

of shot swept the decks of the galleys. The oarsmen, disconcerted, dropped their oars. An ambuscade! Was the whole shore lined with ambuscades? The timid soul of Sinān was discouraged. He ordered the soldiers to reëmbark. The expedition ended in the devastation of the defenceless villages and farms in the interior of Malta, in fire and sword and plunder, and in the capture of the neighboring island of Goza; but the fortress was left. Dragut's revenge was postponed for a time.

Abandoning Malta, Sinān sailed on to Tripoli. This town belonged to the Knights, and the Knights must be subdued. If Malta still stood, Tripoli must fall. And the capture of Tripoli was an easier task, for its ramparts were in ruins and its garrison weak. The Knights were too poor to restore its defences. But the spirit of the commandant was stronger than his battlements. Summoned to surrender, Gaspard de Villiers replied, "Tripoli has been intrusted to my charge; I shall defend it to the death." Four hundred men were all the garrison he had.

Without delay, six thousand Turks and forty guns were landed, and a battery opened fire on the largest tower. A lively answer from the fort, and the walls stood firm. Still the batteries kept up their fire, and still the walls were uninjured. The siege promised to be a long one, when a traitor crept from the fort, crossed the moat,

and reached the camp of Sinān. Through him the Turkish admiral learned the weak points in the wall ; the guns were turned on the towers of Santiago and Santa Barbara ; the stones crumbled, a large breach was opened. The garrison, worn out, discouraged, refused to fight or to throw up earthworks. The commandant was forced to surrender on honorable terms, but Sinān thought only of his reception at Constantinople, and threw every man into chains to grace his triumph.

For the next few years Dragut, always on the move, always in the van of every Turkish expedition, appeared now on the coast of Calabria, now on the coast of Apulia. Every spring a fleet sailed out of the Bosphorus ; and every spring the shores of the Mediterranean were raided. Treasures and captives fell into his hands, and the Christians were unable to resist him. But every now and then the powers of Europe rose in a great effort to crush the Turks with a telling blow. In 1560 a forest of masts gathered at Messina. Spain, Genoa, the Knights, the Pope, all contributed to the armament. The Duke of Medina Celi was placed in chief command. Tripoli was its goal. But before it could reach Tripoli, storms and disease and death had so crippled its forces that orders were given to turn aside to Jerba.

Could Jerba, the ancient seat of pirates, the lair of Urūj, of Kheyr-ed-din, and of Dragut, fall into the hands of Christians? For a moment it

seemed so. In March the flag of Spain waved proudly over the castle of the corsairs, planted there by Medina Celi. Jerba had fallen an easy conquest. Then the commander-in-chief and his troops set to work to strengthen the fortifications. All winter they worked, confident of being left unmolested, for the Turks never moved out of port before May, and could not reach them till late in June. Medina Celi lingered to see the forts completed, the parapets heightened, and the moat made deeper. Then he would carry his fleet back to Messina. But he lingered too long.

Early in May a frigate sped in haste from Malta bearing news of great moment: the Turkish fleet was on the water. Twenty galleys were heading for Jerba. A panic seized the Christians. "The Turks, the Turks!" Hurried embarkations, confusion, despair. In the very straits where Dragut had been caught and escaped, the Christians were now caught and did not escape. Not a ship of all that gallant fleet sailed back to Messina. Galleons and galleys fell into the hands of the Turks, and eighteen hundred men met a bitter and humiliating death.

As Dragut had lived, so was he to die in the heat of battle, with the cry of victory on his lips. In 1565 the famous siege of Malta was in progress. This is not the place to describe that glorious defence; but Dragut was there for his revenge, and we must tell of him.

The Turkish armada, under Piali Pasha and Mustafa, lay before Malta. On the promontory of Sceberras, under Fort St. Elmo, thirty thousand Turks were landed, earthworks thrown up, and twenty-one guns opened fire on the little garrison of a few hundred men. Dragut arrived late at the rendezvous, too late to advise an attack on Goza rather than St. Elmo. The siege must go on as it had begun, and Dragut threw all his energy and vigor into aiding the attack. Whole days he passed in the trenches or at the batteries. None understood better than he the art of the gunner, and regardless of danger he directed the batteries and set up his own culverins on what was long known as Dragut's Point.

For twenty-three days the conflict raged. Wall after wall was battered down. As soon as one fell a new one was set up in its place. Then Dragut made a bridge across the moat with some of his largest yards, and stormed the castle long and furiously. One by one the brave knights fell on the ruins of their walls, but not until eight thousand Turks had been slain. The line of blockade was lengthened to the water's edge and St. Elmo was isolated. Dragut himself directed the engineers in this new work, and reckless of danger stood outside the intrenchments. Suddenly he fell. Part of a stone, shattered by a shot from the enemy, struck him on the head.

As he lay senseless on the ground, Mustafa

threw a cloak over him, that none might know of their great loss. Five days later St. Elmo fell, and Dragut, lying in his tent at the point of death, heard the news, and his soldier's heart rejoiced. He did not live to see the glorious victory of the Knights; he lived only to know that the fort he had besieged, the fort which had given him his death-wound, was a mass of ruins.

A corsair's life, a soldier's death, — and the brave spirit, gay, romantic, vivid, without ambition, filled with a love for the sea, the last of the great freebooters, joined his pirate brethren that had gone before.

## CHAPTER V

### FROM GALLEY BENCH TO THRONE

IT was a strange freak of fortune that led Ochiali, the Renegade, from a galley bench to a throne, from the most abject and despised of slavery to the kingship of Barbary and the chief captaincy of the Ottoman Empire. He began life in so very obscure and forlorn a fashion that he had not even a name—not a name of any kind, first or last. Born in one of the poorest and meanest villages of southern Italy, he was to the last degree illiterate and ignorant, but he at least turned out to be a sturdy, robust boy, and he was of course a Christian Catholic. His only employment was to row in a wherry or fishing-smack, and it was while he was off on one of these fishing voyages that he was captured by a Barbary corsair and carried in chains to Algiers.

His new master found him a strong, stalwart youth, thoroughly inured to the sea, a real salt-water tough. He consequently chained him to one of the foremost benches of his own galley as a mark of especial favor, and there the Calabrian youth pulled and strained at the great, heavy oar, bending his back to the lash, day after day,



and year after year. Not only did he have to bear the bonds and the stripes of his master, but also the sneers and the derision of his fellow-slaves. For so miserable and repulsive was his condition that all refused to be either his messmate or his bench-mate except under the compulsion of the strap.

For many years he had suffered insults and cruelty with we know not how much patience, when a severe blow dealt him one day by a soldier on board the galley roused all the slumbering hatred and resentment of his nature. His one desire in life now was to avenge that hurt. He had endured hardships, pain, and suffering, but this added humiliation he would not endure.

So he turned Mussulman. His chains were knocked off, he was freed from the bench, he won liberty, but with it he also won a name that is odious in every land, — the “Renegade.” The Turks had called him Fartas, “Scurvied”; he was now nicknamed Ochiali, a corruption of Aluch Ali.

Ochiali soon showed himself too valuable a seaman to be lost to the profession, and his pirate master made him boatswain. In this capacity, and from his portion in the lootings, he amassed a pile of ducats enough to buy himself a share in a brigantine. Capacity finds its level in the end, and Ochiali played his part so well that in a few months he rose to be captain and sole proprietor

of a small galleot. He was now looked upon as the boldest and most expert of all the Barbary corsairs, and his fame spread until it reached the ears of Dragut.

It was the policy of the great chiefs of piracy to give generous encouragement to all rising and promising young freebooters, and thus to make auxiliaries out of men who might have one day become rivals. Dragut extended a friendly hand of comradeship to the new pirate captain, and invited him to enter his service. Quick to see that the road to preferment lay in the regular and not the independent ranks, Ochiali accepted the position of lieutenant and special emissary to the corsair king, and abandoned his free roving.

This clever pirate was now intrusted with a series of important missions in which he displayed his resolute and astute mind. When Medina-Celi threatened Jerba and held the sea with his Spanish armada, it was Ochiali who was despatched in haste to Constantinople to implore assistance. So well did he use the arts of diplomacy and persuasion as minister plenipotentiary to the Porte that he returned with a force of one hundred galleys under the command of the famous Piali Pasha, one of the greatest of Turkish admirals. The entire rout of the Spanish fleet and the defeat of the land forces, to which Ochiali had so largely contributed, raised him into high favor with Turks and corsairs.

Attentions were showered upon him by Piali Pasha, who developed a warm and admiring friendship for the ex-galley-slave, and was never tired of showing him honor. Ochiali, meanwhile, took every opportunity to distinguish himself, and chances were not wanting for a man of spirit. He took active part in the siege of Malta, and was in all the daring enterprises that Dragut, his chief, set on foot. Full of resource, energy, and dash, he was always to be seen at the front, fearless of death and danger; and when Dragut fell before St. Elmo, mortally wounded, it was Ochiali who took his place as leader.

The death of Dragut proved to be Ochiali's chance. For Piali Pasha appointed him viceroy of Tripoli, and sent him with three galleots to take possession of his new kingdom and to bury his master. Not only did he fall heir to Dragut's dominions, but also to his personal property, his galleys, slaves, and treasure. So that he suddenly found himself by a turn of the wheel a rich and powerful ruler.

Ochiali had won his good fortune by capacity and tact. He now continued on this very successful course, and partly we hope out of gratitude, partly we think out of self-interest, he cultivated the mighty Piali Pasha, whose high position gave him strong influence and power with the Sultan. After every successful piratical deal in rubies and gold ducats, or in silks and velvets, he sent costly

and magnificent gifts to the great pasha at Constantinople. Other men of far more polish and cultivation have been snobs or toadies. Then why should not a pirate be a snob, and why should he not flatter the great men in high places by sending them presents in the hope of being invited to dine at the palace, or of being pulled up a little higher on the social or political ladder? The irony of justice is that snobs usually succeed, if they are good actors and never make a serious blunder. But this requires cleverness and self-control. Ochiali had both, and therefore made a brilliant success.

The result was that when many bitter complaints were brought to the attention of the Sultan against the reigning pasha of Algiers, the great Piali used his interest and influence to capture that high position for his favorite. It is needless to say that he was successful, and an imperial order sealed with imperial seals was brought in state to Tripoli containing Ochiali's appointment to the viceroyalty of Algiers.

The first time that Ochiali had entered Algiers it was as the meanest of slaves, laden with irons; the second time, he made his entry as the highest ruler in Barbary, loaded with honors.

As king, Ochiali put in practice the astute and sagacious policy that he had adopted as courtier, and almost at once he had an opportunity to show his moderate, judicious, and we may even say

fair-minded disposition, although one is usually cautious in attributing fair-mindedness to a pirate. At his accession the famous revolt of the Moors in Spain, well known as the Morisco Rebellion, was at its height. The insurgents had intrenched themselves in their mountain fastnesses in the wild and impassable Alpuxarras, and were making head against the Christian king. But they doubted their own powers to hold out, and earnest appeals for help were sent to the new viceroy of Algiers.

Not wishing to involve his state in a war with Spain, Ochiali refused all official aid, but he gave permission to his subjects to volunteer as private individuals and join the army of insurgents in the capacity of adventurers. But when the Algerine Moors collected a great quantity of arms and ammunition, and were proposing to ship them to the coast of Andalusia and sell them to the rebels, Ochiali put his veto on the whole affair. He had no intention of having his own dominions stripped of their means of defence, or of making money out of the necessity of friends. On this point the pirate and renegade might be copied to advantage by highly civilized countries of the present century.

A royal manifesto was then issued to the effect "that all such as had two of a sort, as muskets, swords, or other weapons, might, if they thought fit, send over one of them, provided they did it *gratis*, and purely for the sake of the cause ; but

he would never," he said, "allow any of them to strip themselves of their arms for lucre."

Not content with this estimable sentiment, and wanting to see for himself that his instructions were carried out, Ochiali ordered all donations of weapons to be brought to a certain mosque, where he personally inspected the contributions. These proved to be so "prodigious," that he again exerted his prerogative and reserved a portion of the arms to be stored in the government magazine, permitting the remainder to be shipped to Spain.

Ochiali was a born diplomat. There was no question of heredity or of education with him. He was a self-made man, more so than any American, because no American was ever born into such squalor and degradation. With him diplomacy was an instinct, and he brought it into play with a deftness and opportuneness that showed the natural statesman. He had occasion to make use of it in his dealings with the Tunisians.

In the second year of his administration he was approached by an embassy representing the nobility of Tunis, who craved his succor and protection. The people of Tunis were groaning under an oppressive and insulting tyranny; the nobles especially were insufferably abused, their possessions confiscated, and their lives in danger. They had heard of the just and enterprising character of the viceroy of Algiers and sought his help. Ochiali did not jump at the chance. He received

the embassy with interest and kindliness, but did not commit himself. He told them that he wished to think the matter over, and he took his time about it.

Months passed, and no word of hope or encouragement came from Algiers. The nobles became anxious and uneasy. Again they appealed to the pasha in urgent terms, this time making him in writing the formal offer of the sovereignty of their entire kingdom to be held by him in the name of the Sultan. This precisely suited the ideas of Ochiali, and was what he had waited for.

Setting out from Algiers with a small army of five thousand Turks, six thousand mountain cavalry, and a train of ten light field-pieces, he picked up reënforcements along the way, in his march through the neighboring towns, and pitched his camp at Beja, an ancient city two days' ride from Tunis. The tyrant of Tunis, King Hamida, soon came to attack him with an army of thirty thousand horse and foot. To all outward appearance the force was overwhelming, but treason lurked in high places.

Scarcely had the engagement begun and the first shot been fired than the general of the cavalry and two other officers of high rank deserted, with their regiments, to the side of the Algerines. Filled with alarm, Hamida turned and fled toward Tunis, and in the night stole away to the fort of the Goletta, carrying with him his money, jewels,

wives, and other valuables. Ochiali walked into Tunis without opposition, and took possession of his new realm, distributing favors with princely liberality, and treating his Arab and Moorish subjects with extreme courtesy.

Ochiali was beginning to tire of his duties as sovereign, and he could hear the voice of the salt water calling him irresistibly away from city streets and from mountains and plains. After putting his affairs in order, and telling no one of his design, he left Tunis and travelled toward Algiers. But on his way he despatched a negro slave, who was a fleet runner, with secret orders of great moment. This man, writes the old historian of Algiers, "was so famous a walker that he would outgo and tire any horse in the whole country." The courier carried orders to all the captains of galleys and galleots "to get ready for an expedition with the utmost despatch."

It was a gay little fleet that sailed out of harbor a short time afterward. The admiral galley took the lead, and was followed by twenty-three other smart and dapper vessels, well manned and provided for a cruise. Shaping his course eastward, Ochiali sighted Sicily, and looked eagerly about for signs of an adventure. Picking up some fishermen, who were the newsmongers of the coast, he learned with keen relish that four Maltese galleys, among them the flag-ship of the



general of the galleys, lay in the harbor of Licata, on their way to Malta.

This was a rare chance for the pirate king. He ordered all sails to be taken in and stowed away, to prevent discovery, and lay to, oar in hand, in the channel which separates Sicily from Malta. Soon the Maltese galleys were seen, sailing unconsciously along into the very jaws of the enemy. In a moment they were surrounded. Only one, the *St. Ann*, made a desperate fight against eight of the Algerines. The others tried to escape, but were caught and captured. Ochiali then bore away for Algiers, banners waving and streamers flying gayly on the breeze, while the rich prizes were towed triumphantly into port.

Again Ochiali put to sea. This time he had received an urgent message from the Sultan. A powerful fleet was being fitted out at Constantinople for some great expedition against Christendom. The Corsair king was bidden to join the Ottoman forces with all possible speed, and to bring a strong contingent. He weighed anchor at once, and carried his best cruisers with him.

The island of Cyprus was the sentinel of Christian Europe; every movement of the Turks was watched and reported from its shores; it was an offence to the Porte, or so the Sultan considered it. Constantinople was not at war with Venice, to whom the island belonged, but it was easy to pick a quarrel, and this the Sultan did. War was

declared, the Turkish fleet sailed out of the Bosphorus, met the Barbary squadron on the way, and together they spread their line around Nicosia, the capital of the island.

It was not a long shrift. The capital surrendered, Famagusta fell, the garrisons were massacred. The Christian fleet, numbering several nationalities under separate leaders, — a formidable armament made powerless by jealousies and wranglings, — sailed around the waters at a safe distance, and then returned to Sicily in fear of a gale. Cyprus fell into the power of the Turks, and has remained theirs to this day.

So far the Christians had pitted a disunited coalition against a united whole. The dissensions between the allies and the disputes among the commanders had been as fruitful of defeat as the guns of the Turks. But the moment was to come when the tide of Moslemism was to be once for all turned back on to its own shores, and the naval supremacy of the Mediterranean pass from the hands of the Ottomans into those of the Christians. As Barbarossa had seen the rise of the crescent, Ochi-ali was to see its wane.

The famous alliance called the "Holy League," between Spain, Venice, and Rome, had been formed with the intent of crushing the power of the Sultan. For want of an able commander-in-chief it had failed at Cyprus, to the lasting disgrace of Europe. At Lepanto it was to meet with a ring-

ing success through the skill of its high-admiral, the brilliant and chivalrous John of Austria, who had been appointed sole commander of the fleet. He was scarcely more than a youth, this gallant brother of Philip II and son of Charles V, but he had already won renown by his masterly quelling of the Morisco Rebellion, and had succeeded where veterans had failed.

The fleet of the allies, collected at Messina, was the largest Christian armament ever arrayed against the crescent. Under the sacred banner of the League were assembled over three hundred vessels and eighty thousand men. The king of Spain sent a fleet of a hundred and sixty-four galleys, frigates, and brigantines; the contingent from Venice, headed by their famous commander, Veniero, numbered a hundred and thirty-four galleys and galleasses; while the Pope had sent a squadron of eighteen vessels under the command of Colonna. On the 16th of September, 1571, the united fleet put to sea, led off by the gorgeous *capitana* galley, the *Reale*, flag-ship of Don John.

Meanwhile the Barbary and Turkish fleets, after a looting cruise up the Adriatic and among the islands, had run into the Gulf of Lepanto, a long, narrow strip of water which almost cuts Greece in two. There they were descried from the maintop of Don John's flag-ship, as sail after sail appeared over the rocky headlands. They were arranged in an immense line of battle,

stretching a mile across, almost from shore to shore.

The young commander-in-chief was keen for the fight. He had determined on a battle, and was not to be deterred by the cautious advice of the allied leaders. "The time for counsel is past," he said to them, "and the time for fighting has come." A signal gun was fired to prepare for action, and the banner of the League floated out at the maintop. The two armaments advanced upon each other : the Turks, confident of victory, uttered wild shouts and screams, clashed cymbals, and blew trumpets ; the Christians, hoping for success, fell on their knees in silent prayer.

When the bugles sounded for the assault, the first galleys to meet and strike were the two flag-ships of Don John of Austria and Ali Pasha, the Turkish commander. Linked together, these two vessels became a battlefield. The harquebusiers of Don John, in a spirited and gallant fight, twice cleared the deck of Ali's ship, and twice were driven back by the janissaries of the pasha. At the third attempt the Spaniards reached the mast and attacked the poop. Ali fell, shot in the forehead. The sacred standard of the Turks was pulled down, and the banner of the cross run up in its stead.

Meanwhile there was hard fighting on the wings. The Turkish right made a clever flanking movement by running close to the shoals and shallows

of the shore, and caught the Venetian squadron between two fires. A dense shower of shot and arrows enveloped the Christian ships. Their commander fell, and for a moment the chances wavered ; but rallying in a supreme effort, the Venetians beat off the enemy, and captured the corsair, Kara Ali.

The fiercest struggle was on the left wing, and the heat of the battle fell on Ochiali, who, at the head of his Barbary squadron, was the most brilliant and distinguished figure in the Turkish armament on that memorable day. Wheeling and skimming with his swift ships in a series of bewildering manœuvres, like a hawk around his prey, the crafty corsair suddenly dashed through the opposing line, and rounded up in the rear of the disconcerted and astonished Christians. Then, swooping down upon the small squadron of the Knights of Malta, he carried fire and sword upon the ships of the white cross banner. Knight after knight fell at his post, fighting with heroic ardor ; the Prior was pierced with arrow wounds, his *capitana* captured, and the banner of St. John dragged down and borne away as a trophy.

But Ochiali's brilliant dash was of no avail, and the day was already irretrievably lost to the Turks. The Marquis of Santa Crux bore down upon him ; Don John swept around from the centre ; and the redoubtable corsair, the most

skilful of the Turkish leaders, drew his vessels in good order out of battle.

The Turks were overwhelmingly defeated. Their losses were enormous. Two hundred of their galleys were captured, burnt, or sunk. The remainder retreated to Constantinople. Ochiali, however, arrived there with some show of distinction, for he at least had brought with him the banner of the Knights of Malta to hang up in St. Sophia. And the Sultan received him with favor, appointed him captain-pasha, and confirmed him in his Barbary sovereignty. His reputation spread among the Turkish dominions, and he was looked upon as the most powerful of all Ottoman commanders.

On the borders of the Black Sea Ochiali built for himself a sumptuous palace, a magnificent mosque, and an imposing sepulchre. There he lived in state, when he was not on the war-path, with a household of five hundred renegades whom he called his children. He was tall and robust, bald-headed, with a voice so strange and hoarse that it could not be heard even a few feet away, and a humor so changeable and yet so decided that he adopted a special mode of dress to warn people of the mood he happened to be in. When he was seen in gay colors, it was considered safe to address him. But when he was dressed in black from head to foot, no one dared to speak to him : that was a sure token that he must not

be approached on any business, however pressing.

Ochiali was the last of the great corsair kings. He was the most powerful, the shrewdest, and in some ways the ablest of the line. After his death the Barbary buccaneers degenerated into a pack of petty pirates, cruel, deceitful, harassing, unscrupulous, and despicable, the thorn and the disgrace of Europe, which tore and humiliated her for more than two hundred years to come.

## CHAPTER VI

### PIRATE SLAVES AND SHIPS

It has sometimes happened that pirates have amused themselves by writing books. In fact, it grew to be the fashion among the buccaneers of the Caribbean Sea to adopt the literary profession after retiring from business, just as now lawyers and bankers, tramps and convicts, turn authors and publish novels. But though the newspapers of our day frequently insinuate that there is a subtle connection between piracy and the pen, it is at least a somewhat rare occurrence for a great and world-famed writer to have been the slave of pirates.

The most renowned man who ever bore the chains of Algerine captivity was Cervantes, and in *Don Quixote* he has immortalized his five years' servitude. He had fought with conspicuous gallantry at the battle of Lepanto, where he had been severely wounded in the left hand and maimed for life. Although he had lost the use of his hand, it did not prevent him from carrying arms, and he served for several years afterward in the Mediterranean, under Don John of Austria. In 1575 he obtained leave of absence to revisit his



native country, and set sail from Naples for the coast of Spain.

The ship *El Sol*, on which Cervantes took passage for home, was leisurely shaping her way across the Mediterranean. His brother Rodrigo was also on board, and several other soldiers who had fought under the "Holy League." They dreamed of their home, of Spain, their beloved land ; they could almost see its distant shores, so far had the *El Sol* sailed on her course. To the left lay the treacherous coast of Barbary.

Suddenly an alarm, a rush to arms, the sails pressed on, the rowers urged with the whip, and the good *El Sol* is scudding through the water at full speed with three swift pirate galleys on her heels. A shower of missiles, a running fight ; on and on come the Algerines ; they are close to the fleeing ship, they are alongside ; now they board her, a swarm of villanous-looking cutthroats scramble over her sides and leap yelling on to the deck.

A short, hard struggle, in which Cervantes with his one arm dealt blows to right and left, and then the Spaniards were overpowered, made prisoners, and loaded with irons. Cervantes fell into the hands of a brutal and inhuman corsair captain, Deli Mami. Heavy chains and harsh treatment were his portion on the voyage to Algiers, where he was carried captive, and thrown into a den of slaves. Letters that were found on him from

Don John of Austria and others high in political and military life led his captors to believe that he was a person of rank and consequence. He was bought from his first master by Hassan Pasha, viceroy of Algiers, a renegade unspeakably cruel and bloodthirsty, and was held at a high ransom. Although set apart from the common slaves who were condemned to hard or menial labor, he was treated with unusual severity and watchfulness.

Cervantes' captivity was one of the most rigorous on record in the annals of Algerine slavery, yet such was his personal magnetism and the influence of his brilliant and fearless spirit on all those around him, that he escaped brutal or inhuman treatment. Never in the long five years of his servitude was he touched by hand or lash. Threats of torture, death, and horrible punishment left him unmoved, and for some strange reason were never carried out. His wit, his cheerfulness, his intrepidity, always won him pardon, and no greater penalty than the doubling of his chains.

This same remarkable influence was felt by his fellow-captives. For them he was ready to sacrifice his life; he cheered them, fed them, encouraged them, and was untiring in his efforts to save them. His courage, generosity, and constancy were unfailing. High and low were enthusiastic in their love and admiration for the man whose spirit was never broken, whose hope was never

quenched, whose energy was as unselfish as it was inexhaustible.

Time after time he attempted to escape; resourceful and daring to the last degree, he concocted clever plans and made repeated rash attempts to regain his liberty and that of his friends. Once he tried to reach the Spanish town of Oran on foot; another time an armed Spanish ship was to appear in the harbor and carry off the fugitives. He concealed and fed as many as fifty escaped captives whom he led one by one to a large cave on the shore, only to be betrayed and discovered. Always his attempts miscarried through the treachery or cowardice of one of those whom he was trying to save, and he was finally shut up in the strong palace prison from which there was no possibility of escape.

But his release came at last. For years his family and friends had been exerting every effort and influence to raise the ransom. Finally the sum was collected and sent to Algiers, and Cervantes was a free man.

As many as twenty-five thousand Christian slaves sometimes filled at one time the great prisons of Algiers, and few of them were as fortunate as Cervantes in regaining their liberty or in escaping cruel punishment. Terrible sufferings and harsh treatment were the lot of the wretched captives who were condemned to hard labor. We feel special pity for the galley-slaves who

toiled and sweated at the heavy oars. These were always Christians who were taken captive from the decks of war-galleons or merchant-galleys, or were snatched from their homes on the sunny shores of Spain or Italy. So assured and audacious had the pirates become, and so familiar with the coasts of Christendom, that they "very deliberately, even at noon-day, or indeed just when they please, leap ashore, and walk on without the least dread, and advance into the country, ten, twelve, or fifteen leagues or more; and the poor Christians, thinking themselves secure, are surprised unawares; many towns, villages, and farms sacked; and infinite numbers of men, women, and children dragged away into a wretched captivity." So writes one of the old Spanish chroniclers.

The fleets with which the corsairs levied toll on the seas and terrorized powerful nations were never large. At times they counted as few as seven or eight vessels; at other times as many as thirty-five, and of these some were galleys, some were medium-sized galleots, and a few were small, swift brigantines. In fact, all the pirate ships were fast runners. They were lightly built, easily managed, capital at a chase, and showed a clean keel in escape. They could either follow or flee at pleasure, and in point of speed could not be beaten. But their guns were poor, and in a pitched fight they ran the risk of being badly

battered. This, however, they were clever in avoiding.

The tactics of the pirates were those of the surprise and the ambuscade. They would stow away their sails to avoid being seen at a distance, and lurk among the shadows of a rocky promontory, ready to pounce upon their prey. Then a sudden rush, an unprepared and bewildered foe, a hand-to-hand struggle, chains and captivity, and all was over.

What were these swift sea-hawks like? We must picture to ourselves a long, narrow boat, with pointed beak, carrying only one or two sails, sent skimming through the water by the dip of fifty-four oars and the straining of two hundred and seventy pairs of arms. The success or failure of the chase depends, then, on these strong arms and backs, on these Christian captives who sit below, protected by bulwarks. Let us look at them at their work.

There they are, in the waist of the ship, between the two short decks at prow and poop! Two rows of benches, twenty-seven on each side, run from deck to deck, sunk below the edge of the rail. Five half-naked, half-starved slaves are chained to each bench, their only resting-place by day or night. Here they sleep, and work, and eat, their daily portion of food being three loaves of bread, and water that is not of the purest. True, they are no worse off than the slaves on Christian

galleys ; so it is all one. Here they sit with "one foot on the stretcher, the other on the bench in front, holding an immensely heavy oar, thirty feet long." They bend forward to the stern with arms at full reach to clear the backs of the rowers in front, the oar's end is shoved up, the blade catches the water, and the rowers throw their bodies back on to the bench, while the ship leaps forward through the waves.

Not all the vessels are provided with so large a crew of rowers. The smaller galleys, the galleots, and the light-built brigantines are fitted out with fewer benches, and have only two or four slaves to an oar. Between the two rows of benches runs a narrow gangway or bridge where the boatswain stands guard over the rowers, using prod and whip to goad them to the chase. The poop deck is crowded with soldiers armed with muskets, bows, and scimiters, and on the forecastle stand the captain and his under officers.

The corsairs took great pride in the neat and orderly appearance of their ships, in the discipline, alertness, and efficiency of the crew. The best ships and the best sailors in the Turkish fleets came from Barbary ; they were better manned and better managed than the vessels of the Porte. It would also seem, from the accounts of the writers of those days, that they outstripped the Christians in system and seamanship.

"The Algerines," says an old Spanish writer,

“are out upon the cruise winter and summer, and roam the eastern and the western seas, laughing at the Christian galleys which lie trumpeting, gaming, and banquetting in the ports of Christendom.” They hunt them as they would chase hares and rabbits, and are certain of their game, for their galleots are light and nimble and in excellent order, while the Christian galleys are heavy, embarrassed, and in confusion.

The pirates seem to have had a merry wit, for “when at any time the Christian galleys chase them, their custom is, by way of game and sneer, to point to their fresh-tallowed poops, as they glide along like fishes before them.” So expert did they become, by constant practice, in the art of cruising, “so daring, presumptuous, and fortunate,” that after a run of a few days they would put back to Algiers, colors flying, guns firing, and bulwarks decked with brilliant cloths as the signal that they came laden with riches in gold and captives.

“Thus,” concludes Haedo, the Spanish writer, “they have crammed most of the houses, the magazines, and all the shops of this Den of Thieves with gold, silver, pearls, amber, spices, drugs, silks, cloths, velvets, etc., whereby they have rendered this city the most opulent in the world.”

## CHAPTER VII

### DECATUR IN AT THE FINISH

[I THINK every one will agree that it is exhilarating to read of the corsair kings. There was something big and broad about them. There was even a romantic side to their career. They were villains, but they were stalwart villains, and although we do not approve of them, we find qualities to admire, if nothing more than physical courage, ability to command, and brilliant cleverness.

But there is nothing stimulating about the petty thieves of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, who entered upon the stage after the curtain had fallen at the death of the kings. They were vultures instead of hawks. They were little rogues, mean and despicable in their knavery, with all the cruelty of wild animals left, but little of the courage.]

Of course if it had not been for the jealousies and rivalries between the nations of Europe, the tyrant thieves of Barbary could not have lived and prospered for two hundred years. It was extortion and blackmail on a large scale, a vast system of "graft," fed by commercial competition among the powers. A bribe of one hundred thousand



piastres bought immunity from piracy for Spain, while the trade of her enemy the French king was hounded and harassed. Austria paid an annual tribute ; Venice purchased a treaty of peace ; Denmark was charged fifteen thousand sequins for the privilege of hoisting her own flag over her consulate.

The worst feature in the whole disgraceful affair was that the civilized nations of Europe not only sent bribes but sent consuls to the Barbary States, and so recognized these pirate thieves as a community to be treated with. The Deys took every advantage of Europe's folly. They were insolent and low-born despots who found keen relish in forcing the Christian consuls-general to creep into their august presence under a wooden bar, or to kiss their hands under threat of instant death.

Sometimes it pleased them to throw the consuls into prison, seize and sell their property, and offer them the alternative of paying a ransom of twenty thousand dollars, or of having their legs and arms broken and their bodies cut to pieces. Under such circumstances the ransom was usually paid. One of the Danish consuls fell into disgrace with the Bey of Tunis for presenting to him some arms mounted in copper gilt instead of gold, and thirty Spaniards were shut up for two years in the common prison because his Beylical Majesty was disappointed in the size of two gunboats sent to him

from Madrid. Yet to these barbarous monsters the kings of England sent presents and wrote autograph letters in which they signed themselves "your loving friend."

Even the new-born United States bought freedom from depredation for her merchant shipping by the payment of fifty thousand dollars in cash, eight thousand dollars for secret service, twenty-eight cannon, ten thousand cannon balls, with the addition of gunpowder, cordage, and jewels — a curious mixture.

The list of affronts and insults slavishly borne by the great powers and inflicted with arrogant swagger by the pirate rascals fills the annals of two hundred years. Dutch fleets, French frigates, and British squadrons frequently appeared before the Goletta, but usually sailed away again after a futile demonstration. The result was that Denmark, Sweden, Spain, France, Holland, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States were terrorized by a band of ruffians. Each vied with the other in her attentions to the Beys and Deys. When England sent a sword and six field-pieces, France, not to be outdone, presented a gilded coach and four horses. In return, Ahmed Bey offered the French king a gift of an Arabian horse, a lion and lioness, two ostriches, and four antelopes. Wild animals seem, indeed, an appropriate present for these savages to have presented. The first nation who "struck" at the existing

state of affairs was the United States. "Millions for defence; not one cent for tribute!" was the cry that in 1798 rang through the land across the Atlantic. The American government refused to pay the subsidy to Tripoli, the Bashaw declared war, and the young nation of the New World, who had scarcely recovered from her struggle for emancipation, was plunged into hostilities.

The first two squadrons that were sent to the Mediterranean, under the command of Captain Dale and Captain Morris, made a naval demonstration before Tripoli and patrolled the Mediterranean. They intimidated the pirates and protected American merchantmen. But it was reserved for the third squadron under Commodore Preble, which reached the scene of action in 1803, to attack the thieves in their lairs.

The first dramatic incident in the new campaign was the loss of the *Philadelphia*, Captain Bainbridge's thirty-six gun frigate. She had been assigned, together with the *Vixen*, to the rigorous and dangerous duty of blockading the harbor of Tripoli. The winter season was already in full force, and as active operations could not be begun during the severe weather, the rest of the fleet retired to the shelter of friendly ports. The *Philadelphia* was left to her work on an unknown coast, which was dotted with shoals and reefs, riddled with shallow inlets, and troubled with strange eddies and currents, and with appalling gales.

One of these fierce winds drove the *Philadelphia* off her station, and a hardy blockade-runner that was speeding inshore lured her into a chase. She was carried far into the dangerous waters at the mouth of the harbor, and at the very moment that she was giving up the pursuit, a cry of "half-six" filled every one on board with consternation. The lead was kept going ; the helm was put hard down, the yards were braced sharp up, but it was too late. Her impetus carried her forward and she shot on to a reef. She was lifted several feet out of the water, and stuck fast on a sunken ledge.

Here was a calamity ! One of the finest frigates in the squadron gripped on a rock at the very entrance to the enemy's harbor, a helpless target for the gunboats of the pirates. After the first instant of chill and silent horror, all was astir on the ship. Anchors and guns were thrown overboard, masts were cut away, and every effort made to get her off, but the swell only carried her higher on the reef. In a short time she careened and fell over on her side.

At this moment a division of nine Tripolitan gunboats swarmed out of the harbor and opened fire on the disabled hulk. Resistance was really futile, as there was scarcely a gun that could be brought to bear on the boats, but a gallant attempt at defence was made, and then, seeing the uselessness of it, Captain Bainbridge ordered

the flag to be hauled down. But before surrendering, the magazine was flooded, holes were bored through the bottom of the ship, the pumps choked, and everything done to make the *Philadelphia* a useless wreck.

When sure of their prey, the pirates rushed on board, and a scene of wild confusion followed. The crew was robbed; the officers stripped of their epaulets, uniforms, watches, money; the whole ship was plundered and looted. The only thing that Captain Bainbridge succeeded in saving, after a fierce hand-to-hand struggle, was the miniature of his wife. Hurrying the men indiscriminately into their boats, the pirates carried off their prisoners to Tripoli, and there they were shut up, by order of the Bashaw, in the dank and loathsome prison of the castle.

A week later the wind veered, lifting the *Philadelphia* off the rocks and driving her into deep water. The pirates finished what the wind had begun, and the ship was towed into the harbor, and anchored under the batteries of the castle; her holes were plugged, her guns replaced, she was manned by a full crew of Turks, and turned into a strong reënforcement to the defences of the town.

This was a disastrous beginning to the war. The entire success of the expedition and the honor of the American navy turned on the fate of the *Philadelphia*. Every officer in the squadron was

aghast when the news reached them, and Captain Preble realized the full severity of the blow, not only to his fighting force, but to his prestige. Three hundred and fifteen American prisoners in the castle dungeon, and a large American frigate moored under the castle guns, was a tremendous moral advantage to the Bashaw.

Three months after the fatal catastrophe off Tripoli, a second and more thrilling episode was preparing in this exciting sea-drama. Captain Preble had not been indifferent or inactive in all those weeks. He had been maturing plans and making preparations, and the moment had come for action. An enterprise of great daring and enormous risk was on foot. It had been kept a close secret between the commander and one or two trusted officers. But now it began to leak out, and there was a rush of volunteers. Men begged and clamored for the honor of enlisting in a venture that meant almost certain destruction.

It was Captain Bainbridge from behind his prison walls who managed to smuggle out a letter to Preble suggesting the plan of destroying the *Philadelphia* at her moorings. When Lieutenant Stephen Decatur of the *Enterprise* heard of it he leaped to the idea, and volunteered for the service. Daring, resolute, self-controlled, fearless, cool, and quick of mind, he was the very man to lead the enterprise. Captain Preble at once gave him the command, and there was

no difficulty in getting a crew; it was a case of choosing, for all were eager to serve.

A Tripolitan ketch, or gunboat, had been recently captured. Although she was an old, crazy, and uncomfortable craft, she was the very boat for the desperate venture, as her peculiar Mediterranean rig would deceive the enemy. She was promptly armed, fitted, and loaded with combustibles of every kind; and her name was changed to the *Intrepid*. Decatur's orders were to enter the harbor of Tripoli with as much speed and secrecy as possible, get alongside the *Philadelphia*, board her, overpower the crew, distribute the combustibles on the ship and set fire to them, and then retreat from the harbor — if he could. The brig *Siren* was to hover around the entrance to the port in order to cover the retreating party.

Daring ventures have been frequently attempted; young officers of spirit, dash, patriotism, and courage are seldom wanting to serve in some hazardous enterprise for the honor of the flag, but it is seldom that an attempt however cleverly devised is carried out with such brilliant success in every detail as was the destruction of the *Philadelphia*.

It may have been partly good fortune with Decatur, but it was chiefly good judgment, self-control, and knowing when to do the right thing at the right instant.

On the evening of the 3d of February, 1804, the ketch *Intrepid* set sail from Syracuse, where

the squadron was anchored, and stretched across the Mediterranean, under convoy of the *Siren*. There were seventy-four men on board, and the accommodations were of the slenderest. Decatur and three lieutenants and the surgeon were crowded into the very small cabin. Six midshipmen and the pilot were allotted a platform on the water casks. On the opposite side were the marines on another platform, and the sailors slept on the casks in the hold. This was not all ; for the preparations had been made with haste, and the salted meat turned out to be spoiled ; so their fare consisted of biscuit and water for sixteen days.

After a sail of six days Tripoli was sighted, and all were eager to make the attempt that night. But a fierce gale suddenly began to blow ; the night was black and threatening ; the ketch tossed on the waters ; and the waves were dashed with fury against the reefs and rocks. "To go in would be dangerous, to come out impossible." This was the report of the Maltese pilot who had been sent in a boat with muffled oars to examine the bar. Reluctantly orders were given to haul off ; and none too soon, for the gale increased with such violence that it was almost daylight before they were out of sight of the town.

For six days the storm continued with undiminished fury. The little ketch was beaten and buffeted and in danger of foundering. The men had no rest and were living on prison fare. At



last the wind slackened, and on the morning of February 16th Tripoli was again sighted. The sea was smooth, the weather fair, the winds light. With sails set, and drags pulling from behind to lessen the speed, the *Intrepid* slowly approached the harbor. At ten o'clock in the evening she drifted in on a light breeze.

The harbor lay bathed in the light of the moon ; the countless lights of the town were reflected in the water, and outlined the shapes of the vessels lying at anchor in the port. There was the huge bulk of the *Philadelphia* under the very jaws of the castle batteries at the extreme inner sweep of the white city walls. Her guns were mounted and double shotted. Behind were the fortresses defended by a hundred and fifteen heavy guns and twenty-five thousand Turks and Arabs. On each side stretched out a line of twenty-four gunboats, galleys, and schooners, moored behind an impassable wall of rocks and shoals.

The *Intrepid* was advancing steadily and in profound silence. She shaped her course straight for the *Philadelphia*. Most of the crew were concealed behind the bulwarks, lying flat on the deck, ready to spring at the first word of command. A few, dressed in Maltese costume, stood in full view. Decatur had taken his stand by the pilot. Suddenly the silence was broken by a hail, as the ketch crept softly toward the *Philadelphia's* bow. Catalano, the pilot, answered it in facile Tri-

politanese, while Decatur prompted him at his ear.

The ketch, said Catalano, was from Malta, and on the voyage had been badly damaged in a violent gale, losing her anchors among other mishaps. They therefore begged permission to make fast to the frigate's cables until morning. By now the *Intrepid* was almost alongside, and the Turks were peering curiously over the bulwarks. But no suspicion had been aroused, and the commander granted the request.

But at this moment the treacherous breeze shifted, and a puff took the ketch aback and left her abeam about twenty yards from the frigate. This was the moment of gravest danger. One broadside would have sent the *Intrepid* to instant destruction. The slightest movement of alarm would have been fatal. But Decatur, cool and unmoved, gave his orders in leisurely fashion, as if nothing of importance had ever been done, and time were of no value. A boat was lowered and a rope fastened to the frigate's forechains; with a steady pull the men, lying concealed on deck, brought the ketch into position.

Almost simultaneously the yell "Americanos! Americanos!" and Decatur's sharp cry "Board!" rang out on each vessel. A rush, a spring, and the Americans leaped over the bulwarks and swarmed on deck, cutlass and boarding-pike in hand. The Turks came tumbling and howling

up the hatchway, and collected in a huddled group on the forecastle, where they stood dazed and frightened. Decatur sprang forward at the head of his men and cleared the deck. After a short struggle the Turks plunged overboard, out of the ports and over the rails, in a mad flight. The boarders then dashed below, where they met with little resistance ; in ten minutes the frigate was theirs.

The parties now separated and quickly started the work of firing. Combustibles were handed up from the ketch and distributed in storerooms, steerage, berth deck, wardroom, and cockpit. The piles were lighted, and in twenty minutes the American crew was dashing back into the ketch. As they shoved off from the frigate's side the flames were already bursting from the hatches and pouring through the ports. Before the sweeps could be manned the fire had leaped up ropes and rigging, but a few steady strokes carried the little *Intrepid* out of danger, and the men rested on their oars while they looked back at the burning ship.

It was a magnificent sight. The great tongues of flame, like fiery serpents, licked the sides of the frigate, and curled and twisted around her hull until she seemed caught tight in their burning embrace. Liquid masses of fire rushed up the masts and shrouds. The red glow lighted every corner of the harbor. Just then a ringing cheer of exul-

tation from the ketch was answered by a gun of warning from the shore.

The Americans bent again to their sweeps, and the *Intrepid* swung steadily along the brilliant pathway, the target of a hundred guns. Batteries and gunboats poured their shot after the retreating boat; a shower of missiles fell on all sides, but the Turks' aim was nervous and poor. Only one shot hit the ketch through her top-gallant sail. And as the gallant crew were fairly on their way to safety, a salute was sent by the spirits of the fire to the victors. Boom after boom reverberated over the water. The guns of the *Philadelphia*, heated by the fire, discharged their shot, and sent their last greeting. Then a terrific explosion, a thousand blazing fragments hurled into the air, and the good frigate sank to the bottom.

Decatur and his men reached the *Siren* with the tidings of their success, and immediately sails were hoisted and the two boats sped back to Syracuse, where Captain Preble awaited the result with almost unbearable anxiety. Salutes and congratulations greeted the heroes as they rounded up in the Sicilian harbor. The fame of their exploit spread over Europe, and reached the British blockading fleet before Toulon, where Nelson was heard to say that it was "the most bold and daring act of the age."

This was the turning-point of the war. The pirates had been humbled, their arrogance had

been broken. It only remained for the squadron to complete the work that the bold adventurers had begun. Early in the summer Captain Preble gave orders to weigh, and leading off in the frigate *Constitution* he stood out to sea, followed by three brigs, three schooners, and a division of gunboats and bomb vessels. But the squadron ran into foul weather and beat up against a boisterous northwesterly gale, so that it was early in August before they sighted Tripoli.

The Tripolitans had spent the interval in making ready for the assault, and had stationed a strong force of fourteen gunboats at the two entrances to the harbor to form the vanguard of defence. They were bent on disputing step by step the advance of the Americans, and they gave our squadron some warm work. Five spirited attacks were made during the month of August. The large vessels bombarded the town, pouring a rain of shot and shell into the fortifications and the batteries. Meanwhile the division of gunboats, commanded by Decatur, Somers, Bainbridge, and others of the young officers, made a series of dashing assaults on the gunboats of the enemy. In these fierce hand-to-hand conflicts the Tripolitans lost six of their boats, and were completely routed. The damage to the town was severe, the batteries were silenced, and much of the shipping badly injured.

The last act in the campaign was the intrepid

and tragic attempt made by Somers and a handful of men to set fire to the shipping in the harbor of Tripoli. The successful exploit of the burning of the *Philadelphia* had emboldened the Americans to further ventures, but had also aroused the watchfulness of the Tripolitans. It was with far more desperate risks than Decatur had had to face that Somers set out on his expedition. The same ketch *Intrepid*, which had already passed through one fiery ordeal, was fitted up as a floating mine; a hundred barrels of powder, a hundred and fifty shells, splinters, shot, kentledge, and all kinds of inflammable material, with fuses attached, filled the hold, storeroom, and deck.

In this slumbering volcano two officers, Richard Somers and Henry Wadsworth, and ten men embarked on their heroic undertaking. The ketch was to make her way in the guise of a blockade-runner between the jaws of deadly batteries and through the midst of Turkish gunboats, into the very heart of the harbor. The last that was seen of her and of her brave crew was on the night of the 4th of September, when she spread her wings and vanished into the shadows of the heavy mist that hung low over the water. A few moments later the boom of a gun and the dull roar of artillery showed that she had been discovered. Suddenly a vivid blaze of fire, a gigantic torch of flame leaping upward, and then a rending explosion which shook the town and quivered through the ships

in the offing: that was the last of the gallant band.

The war was now practically at an end. Captain Preble was relieved, and the chief act of his successor was to sign a treaty of peace with the Bashaw, which exempted the United States from the payment of tribute and freed her merchant vessels for all time to come from the depredations of the pirates.

A few years later an American squadron appeared off Algiers, and forced the Dey to make a similar treaty, abolishing both tribute and slavery. The spirited attitude and brilliant success of the United States opened the eyes of Europe, and our example was soon followed by Great Britain and France. The final blow to the existence of the Barbary pirates was dealt by the French when they conquered Algiers in 1830, and later subdued Tunis, and transformed them into French provinces. The old dens of the corsairs have since become the peaceful and prosaic resorts of traders.

## CHAPTER VIII

### A PIRATE ADMIRAL

THE age of Philip II of Spain and Alva, of "Bloody" Mary and Queen Elizabeth of England, was the golden age of piracy. The Inquisition was a great breeding establishment for pirates. Religious persecutions drove men into a life of vagabondage, and the sea became the only safe asylum for those who fled from tyranny and torture. The tremendous upheaval that followed the outbreak of the Reformation, the frenzied strife between Catholic and Protestant, the horrors of the persecutions in the Netherlands, threw the countries that bordered on the Channel and the North Sea into a fiery tumult that resembled a huge volcanic eruption. And in this eruption an immense number of firebrands were scattered over the waters.

In this general state of confusion it is not surprising that fine distinctions disappear. Pirates were patriots, and patriots pirates, and privateers were both, and they were all mixed up in politics. It was just as if the witches had taken a great caldron and mixed all these ingredients together, — piracy, privateering, politics, and patriotism, —



and had produced out of the compound a Beggar of the Sea, a Channel Rover, or a French free-lance. These were the Sea-Wolves of Protestantism.

Holland was in the very heart and heat of the witches' caldron. She was the centre of the religious and party struggle and of the popular turmoil. On her had fallen all the fury of the storm. Oppressed, impoverished, and persecuted by the Spanish tyrants who were her masters, she had been screwed down to the last point of endurance. Her people were paupers, and the whole land was red with innocent blood, but her spirit was still unbroken. Well did she deserve to adopt the motto, "I struggle, but I overcome," when at last she had freed herself as a united people from the hated rule of Catholic Spain.

The Protestant malcontents and champions of liberty had banded themselves together under the leadership of the Prince of Orange. Maddened by the atrocities of King Philip of Spain and of Alva, driven to despair by an inhuman tyranny, the confederates were gradually forming into a large and formidable party scattered over the entire country. As yet they had not been emboldened or exasperated into a revolution, and were still trying to improve the condition of the country by a series of complaints, appeals, and petitions.

It was at this time that they were scornfully and derisively dubbed by their opponents with

the nickname of "Beggars." A deputation of four hundred of the patriot alliance went to Brussels to present a petition to Margaret, the governess-regent of the Netherlands. The council of state was in session at the time. The procession of Dutch nobles, on foot, unarmed, and plainly dressed, marched four abreast to the hall. On seeing this formidable array, the regent was alarmed, fearing an attack or outbreak of some kind. To calm her, the minister leaned over and exclaimed, "What, Madame, you are not afraid of a troop of beggars!" The taunt was caught up and repeated from mouth to mouth.

That night there was a banquet given to the deputation by Brederode, and their new sobriquet was taken up first in jest, then in earnest, and the cry, "Long live the Beggars!" rang through the hall. "It was no shame," they said, "to be beggars for their country's good." The word was immediately accepted as their party name and party badge, and it became the rally cry of the Calvinist confederates. The mendicants' costume of gray cloth was adopted for their dress, the wallet and wooden cup for their emblem, and a gold or silver coin for their badge.

As the patriot party grew, including men of every class and occupation, nobles, merchants, tradesmen, sailors, peasants, there came to be subdivisions. The rougher and more unruly of the malcontents took to the woods, turned bandits,

and were called the "Wild Beggars." Those who loved the adventurous and independent life of the sea took to their boats, turned pirates, and became the famous "Beggars of the Sea."

Holland had, so far, been a country of intrepid but peaceful seafaring people. She had been battling with the ocean ever since her birth, and had bred generations of skilful, fearless, and stubborn seamen. Now that their land had been laid waste and their liberties crushed, this nation of traders, fishers, and carriers, turned into a nation of corsairs and sea-fighters. Mariners and merchants, hounded from their homes, fled to the broad refuge of the water they loved and knew so well, and formed a band of marine outlaws who became the terror of the North Sea.

The Prince of Orange was advised to make use of these piratical bands, and organize them into a strong naval force for the patriot cause. He made an attempt to form a regular fleet of privateersmen out of the wild ocean rebels, and issued letters of marque authorizing the "Beggars of the Sea" to cruise against Spanish ships and harass Spanish commerce. But these beggars were an untamed, unruly set, and it was hard to marshal a pack of roving corsairs into an organized fleet. They remained independent of all control, and the orders issued by Orange to enforce discipline and system did not result in subduing their reckless and lawless spirit. Neither commissions nor

commands could hold in check the rapacious wolves who scoured the sea and preyed on foe and friend. And even the admirals appointed by the prince were as fierce and savage as their freebooting followers.

The most notorious of these pirate admirals was the ferocious William de la Marck, a descendant of that earlier William, called the Wild Boar of Ardennes, who seized the castle of Godfrey de Bouillon, and started a line of untamed and sanguinary nobles. The admiral of the Beggars was as vehement and turbulent as any of his race. In appearance he was wild and shaggy. His beard and hair grew long and unkempt, for he had sworn to leave them unshorn until the crimes of Spain had been avenged. Together with many others he had been present at the execution of his illustrious relation, the Count of Egmont, condemned without a hearing by Alva and the council of blood, and beheaded in the horse-market at Brussels.

The execution of this nobleman of high and ancient descent excited the most intense horror and grief among the thousands of Netherlanders who crowded around the scaffold. Strong men knelt in uncontrolled anguish, dipped their handkerchiefs in the blood of the victim, and vowed after the manner of their savage ancestors, to leave their hair and beards uncut until the death of Egmont had been avenged. William de la Marck was one of these.

Under the standard of the admiral of the Sea-Beggars collected many disaffected noblemen, ruined merchants, rough mariners, and well-known pirates. It was a fleet of beggared adventurers, without means of support excepting plunder, who roved the North Sea, the English Channel, and even swept out into the ocean in search of vessels to seize and sack. It mattered little to the hungry Beggars whether trading-vessels were Spanish, neutral, or even Dutch; the booty was as welcome to them, whatever its nationality. They had been driven to the sea by despair, and in despair kept themselves alive at any one's cost. In a land filled with ruin and sorrow, more and more took to the free and open sea, and to the reckless life of the outlaw. De la Marck's fleet grew rapidly; ship after ship, fitted out at some Dutch port, and easily provided with authorization from the Prince of Orange, joined the admiral's forces. Several valuable merchant vessels fell into their hands, and the news of the rich booty attracted others to the ranks.

But there were many hungry men to feed, and prizes were uncertain. Days passed without the sign of a merchant sail. Traders were beginning to dread the lawless freebooters, and fewer vessels were sent out. The Beggars could not forever sail in mid-seas and starve under the blue skies. Then, too, they had to sell or barter their plunder

for food; so they sought shelter in friendly ports. The harbors of the Netherlands were closed to them by the agents of Alva; only in the northernmost hidden creeks of Friesland could they find refuge.

Denmark and Sweden had also shut their doors on the Beggars; they had no intention of harboring pirates or of bringing upon themselves the displeasure of the relentless Alva, and they turned them away from their ports. But in England, Germany, and France they were tolerated; at Dover, Emden, and La Rochelle they found a market for their stolen goods and laid in stores of provisions.

In Dover roads De la Marck made his headquarters. There he was joined by scores of English rovers, and together they swept the Channel. They were masters of the Straits; no vessel could pass unchallenged, and Spanish ships were chased and captured. Many an exciting race dashed past the ramparts of Dover Castle; Spanish merchantmen with every sail set showing their heels in mad flight, De la Marck in hot pursuit plunging headlong after them. Then, growing daring, the Beggars spread southward to the ocean, and raided Spanish ports; they harassed the coast, pillaged churches, and carried off rich plunder of silver and plate to their nest at Dover. Not content with this, they sped northward and swooped down upon the islands of the North Sea. They even

landed on the coasts of Holland and Friesland, robbed convents, and attacked villages.

The Dutch pirates had become a serious menace. Their depredations finally roused Alva to active steps, and he sent a squadron of war-ships to run them out of their lair. When the armed ships of the Spaniards appeared in the offing, De la Marck and Brederode were tempted to sail boldly out and meet them in open battle. But their light vessels, which were clever at running down and capturing merchantmen, were not so good at holding their own against the heavy fire of men-of-war. Some raking broadsides made them turn on their heels and retreat under cover of the castle. And now came a new turn to affairs. The English resented this invasion of their waters and the sacred right of sanctuary, and opened fire from the batteries.

The fortress guns played havoc among the Spanish ships, and they retreated in disorder out to sea. This was the chance for the Beggars. They were quick at the harassing game, and their boats sped out in chase; they hung upon the Spanish rear, ready to swoop upon the laggards which had been battered by the English shot. Several vessels were brought in, and not only was the booty sold, but even the Spanish officers were put up at auction in the market-place, and bought on speculation at a hundred pounds a head. The purchasers hoped to make a fortune by their ran-

som, and meanwhile held their prisoners, or slaves, in chains.

Alva's attempt to hunt down the freebooters had not been successful, so he turned to other means. He sent peremptory complaints to Queen Elizabeth, demanding that she should cease to harbor rebels and pirates, and should turn them out of her waters. Elizabeth was too much afraid of King Philip not to comply outwardly, for her own relations with Spain were at the straining point, and she issued an order forbidding her subjects to supply the freebooters with bread, beer, or meat. De la Marck was commanded to leave her ports, under penalty of being treated as a pirate, and the last asylum of the Beggars of the Sea was rudely taken away from them.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE BEGGARS OF THE SEA

WHEN the Beggars were requested to leave the shores of England, they were left without a refuge in the whole of Europe. The other nations had already driven them from their harbors from fear of Alva, and the Dutch pirate patriots were vagrants and wanderers on the sea. Still, the orders of Elizabeth had not been carried out with severity. De la Marck had lingered for a month in Dover roads, after the papers of eviction had reached him, and it is not likely that the English traders could resist the allurements of buccaneer gold. The admiral was waiting, too, for a Spanish merchant fleet that was soon expected to pass through the Straits.

Late in March, 1572, the white sail of the traders, puffed out by the breeze as the heavily laden vessels leisurely made their way toward Antwerp, filled the Beggars with excitement. De la Marck was ready for a start, and he dashed out of the harbor in hot pursuit. The merchantmen crowded on the canvas and fled pell-mell as fast as their groaning yards and bulging sail would carry them. But the Beggars caught up with the

tail of the convoy, captured two rich prizes, and tossed their crews unceremoniously overboard. It was a rich haul, for one of the vessels alone was worth sixty thousand crowns. The last that was seen of the Beggars from Dover cliff, they were still racing out to sea after the flying fleet.

Whether as the result of chance and starvation, or of a deep-laid scheme, the Beggar squadron of twenty-four vessels suddenly appeared at the mouth of the Meuse, and anchored before Brille at the southern end of Holland. Driven to desperation, they were determined to gain a foothold on their own land. They had heard that Brille was without a garrison, and thought it a good moment to strike a blow. When the inhabitants awoke early on the morning of April 1st, they were thunderstruck to see a strange fleet under their walls. Were these the ferocious Beggars at their gates? Had De la Marck, the terror of every town along the seaboard, come to sack the city? People were seized with panic, and crowded to the docks to hear the news.

A ferryman, who was himself a patriot and secretly sympathized with the rebel cause, rowed confidently out to the fleet. He was all interest and excitement to know what they intended to do. The first object of the Beggars was a material one. They needed provisions; there were about four hundred men on board, and not a scrap of food left. Captain Brand, who was faint with hunger,

had been given a piece of cheese for breakfast, the last grain of food on board. It was absolutely necessary to get supplies.

De la Marck seems to have thought only of their pressing needs ; any slumbering patriotism was forgotten when hunger gnawed mercilessly with its sharp fangs. But fortunately for the fate of Holland, one of his commanders, William of Treslong, was a man of spirit and of more lofty purpose. He was one of the most famous of the water-rebels, and came of a well-known line of fighting nobles. Instantly he saw the chance for a bold stroke. Take matters into their own hands, and they could win a victory for the patriot cause. It was an enterprise that appealed to his adventurous spirit. He hurried to the admiral and urged him to demand the surrender of the town. His enthusiasm won over De la Marck, who entered into the scheme with zest.

When the ferryman returned to Brille, it was with a summons to the magistrates of the city. They were asked, under the mouth of the cannon, to hand over the keys of the place to De la Marck, admiral of the Prince of Orange, and to send two commissioners to confer with the rebels. It was a daring demand to be made by four hundred starved Beggars, for Brille was fortified with high walls and defended by stout guns. But the fame of the redoubtable pirates had gone before them. Consternation seized the people, and the grave

magistrates trembled at the thought of meeting the dreaded De la Marck.

There was a general rush out of Brille. People seized their treasures and fled. All the rich inhabitants took to their heels without ceremony ; only a few of the poor, who had nothing to lose, stayed behind. The magistrates were more deliberate ; they meant to escape but did not wish to show fear. Receiving with dignity the message brought by the ferryman, they asked him how large a force De la Marck had under him. "Oh, about five thousand, I should say," answered the man, casually. This decided the matter. Two deputies, with stout hearts, went forth as martyrs to the pirate chief. But while they were conferring on board the fleet, the rest of the lords picked up their chattels and ran.

When De la Marck and Treslong, with two hundred and fifty men, marched to the gates two hours later, they came upon an almost empty city. The governor was just too late to escape ; he was on the point of retreating out of the southern gate when he ran into Treslong at the head of his party. After a short struggle the pirates made themselves masters of the governor and the gate. Meanwhile De la Marck had burned and battered down the northern gate, and the two divisions marched unopposed through the city. The admiral took formal possession in the name of the Prince of Orange.

Gradually the citizens began to return, finding that their lives and property were safe at the hands of the Beggars. The unscrupulous pirates were fast becoming exemplary patriots. Only the churches and the convents were plundered and destroyed. The rage of the infuriated Calvinists vented itself on the sacred images of the Catholic churches. And De la Marck, with a return of his ferocious spirit, and remembering his vow, imprisoned and executed thirteen monks and priests.

The fall of Brille was the signal-gun of the rebellion. The half-hearted and the timid were fired with new resolution. As the news of the first bold stroke of the war flashed over the land, town after town rose in arms, cut down their Spanish garrisons, and took possession of the town-hall. The banner of freedom, first flung out to the breeze by the hands of De la Marck, was soon seen floating over Flushing, Leyden, and a dozen other cities. The champions of liberty took fresh heart, and the excitement and enthusiasm spread like a conflagration. The revolt had long been planned and prepared for, only waiting for a spark to light the bonfire, and after all it was the half-despised, half-disapproved of, and wholly dreaded Beggars of the Sea who had dared to start the train. The rash inspiration of a moment was the salvation of Holland, and the first stone of Dutch independence. De la Marck and

Treslong, the pirate chiefs, had struck the first decisive blow for freedom.

The wits had a merry jest at the expense of Alva. In Flemish the name of the town Brille means also spectacles, and the punning verse ran,

“On April Fool’s Day,  
Duke Alva’s spectacles were stolen away.”

The Duke shrugged his shoulders on receipt of the news, and said, “It is nothing!” as was his wont when bad news was brought to him. But he hastily sent an armed force to reduce the rebels. Ten companies arrived before Brille and demanded its surrender, and the Beggars were at their wits’ end to know how to defend the town against so large a force. But there was a patriot carpenter in the place who was a daring man and who knew a secret. Axe in hand, he leaped into the water, swam to the Niewland sluice, and broke down the barriers. The sea poured in and cut off all approach from the north.

This gave the rebels only one gate to defend, and when the besiegers veered around to the southern entrance, they were met by a furious discharge which broke their ranks. Then a cry went up from the Spaniards that their ships were on fire. The gallant Treslong, with a comrade, had rowed out to the Spanish vessels, cut their cables, set some on fire, and sunk others. The blazing ships and the fast rising sea spread a panic among

the soldiery. They fled precipitately along the wet and slimy causeway, many being drowned in their hurried retreat.

The seizure of Brille, the key to the Meuse, had been important. Still more so was the possession of Flushing, which commanded the mouth of the river Scheldt. The inhabitants had risen against the Spanish garrison, and sent for aid to De la Marek. The admiral despatched Treslong with two hundred men, and the town was captured. The rebels had now two strong bases of operations, from which they could cover the approach of any fleet passing from Spain to the northern countries, and they soon had a chance to use their advantage.

The Duke of Medina-Celi was arriving from Spain with a fleet of forty vessels. Knowing nothing of the change of owners at Flushing, he sailed innocently into the Scheldt. Besides the ships carrying twenty-five hundred fresh Spanish troops, there were several rich merchant vessels in the fleet, laden with valuable cargoes. As the ships hugged the shore and came close to the town, the batteries were suddenly opened on them and cut them up with a shower of shot.

In the confusion of this unexpected attack a band of the Sea-Beggars dashed out in their small boats and fell upon the bewildered Spaniards. Twenty-four vessels were boarded and captured, and with the ferocity of revenge the Beggars

drowned all their prisoners, in retaliation for the thousands of Netherlanders who had been hanged by their Spanish captors. The booty was rich, two hundred thousand crowns in money and five hundred thousand in merchandise, all of which went into the coffers of the confederate cause.

Liberty swept like a whirlwind over the Netherlands. The seaboard towns were the first to revolt, and the control of the sea was in the hands of the patriots. This was the most important step toward the success of the rebellion, and it had been won by the fierce Beggars of the Sea. The possession of the coast-line made it possible for the Prince of Orange to establish a regular navy; money had been pouring in, arms and recruits arrived daily, and a fleet was soon organized. The pirates had a squadron of their own which took part in almost every naval operation. They formed a terrific auxiliary to the regular fleet, savage in their ferocity, but wonderfully disciplined, and the most skilful of Dutch seamen.

Their small band, never more than eight hundred or a thousand strong, was frightful to look upon; they were shaggy veterans, scarred, maimed, and blood-stained, often without an arm or a leg, the survivors of desperate fights. Their hatred of Spain and the Inquisition had taken such possession of them that it had turned them into wild beasts. They never gave nor received quarter, and their ways of vengeance were those of the



most inhuman and ferocious pirates. Their lives were those of corsairs; they had neither pay nor subsistence, but depended for their bread and money either on the generosity of the seaports where they anchored, or on occasional forays and the plunder from merchant ships.

Hunger, privation, and hardships they met with stoical endurance. They held their lives cheaply, and were always ready to blow up their ship and themselves rather than fall into the hands of the enemy. Many were the stories told of their intrepidity. Captain Hoen, the commander of two small river boats, was one of those who distinguished himself for his prowess. With a crew of eighteen men he landed on a dike outside of Amsterdam and attacked a party of a hundred and twenty Spanish soldiers. Hemming them in at both ends, the pirates let fly a volley of musketry, and then attacked the troops with the long poles they used in leaping ditches. As the short lances of the Spaniards were useless, the troops were driven back, only to fall on to the Beggars at their rear. This was kept up until not a Spaniard was left alive. But wild, piratical, and remorseless as they were, the Sea-Beggars were the nucleus and the beginning of that world-famed Dutch navy which held the supremacy of the waters a hundred years later.

Meanwhile William de la Marck had been made captain-general of the land troops, and had col-

lected an army of undisciplined mercenaries, who were both the help and the hindrance of the party. Their audacity in war was only matched by their excesses after victory. De la Marck himself was a man of extremes ; prompt and reckless as a leader, he was also brutal, overbearing, and insolent, and his cruelty was atrocious. He was finally deprived of his office and thrown into prison, and afterward ended his days as an exile.

But the Beggars of the Sea continued to live after they had lost their most noted commander, and during the next two years took part in several important actions. It was they who helped in the brilliant capture of Middleburg, the chief stronghold of Zealand. For nearly two years an army of patriots had blockaded the Spanish garrison in this strongly fortified town, and early in 1574 the Spanish admiral, Don Sanchio d'Avila, arrived with a fleet of forty vessels and a thousand troops to raise the siege.

Before the Spanish fleet reached the mouth of the Scheldt, a strong patriot squadron of forty men-of-war, among them the Sea-Beggars, fell upon one of the enemy's divisions and cut it to pieces. Ten of the largest Spanish ships were destroyed, the rest turned and fled, and Middleburg surrendered. This left the Beggars masters of the sea. They burned Spanish war-ships, and captured Spanish merchantmen ; they plundered

merchandise, and carried off rich booty of plate and valuables.

The last famous exploit of the Sea-Beggars was the thrilling and dramatic relief of Leyden. The defence of this city of Holland was one of the most pathetic and heroic of the war. For five months a besieging army of eight thousand Spanish soldiers had blockaded Leyden on all sides. So closely was the town invested that no one could go in or come out through the close cordon of troops. The Spaniards were content to wait until famine and suffering should drive the people to surrender.

Unfortunately the Leydenese had been careless and overconfident. They had already once been blockaded for a few weeks, earlier in the year, but had not expected the return of the Spaniards, and in the meanwhile no preparation had been made for defence. They had neither garrisoned the town nor laid in stores of grain or any kind of provisions. There was not food enough in the whole place to last three months. A girdle of forts or redoubts, built and held by the Spaniards, cut off every approach from the land side. And toward the sea, the land was riddled by a series of dikes and canals that held back the waters of the ocean.

Leyden was the garden of Holland. The city lay in the midst of fruit orchards and flowers. Stretches of green pastures reached for miles

around ; the million streams of the spreading Rhine were lined with trees. Redeemed from the sea and the sand by generations of dauntless Hollanders, the land had bloomed and blossomed in generous return.

But now the beleaguered city was a painful contrast to all this glory. Her only defenders were a handful of pirates and the burgher guards. The provisions were in custody and doled out at short rations. Already the bread was exhausted, and only the watch received half a pound of meat per day. Men and women ate whatever they could find, — boiled leaves and roots, salted vine-leaves, and chopped skins, dogs, and cats, cooked or even raw.

The famine was at its height, yet the hearts of the people were stout and unflinching, even while their bodies were racked with pain. Flattering offers and promises of pardon from the Spanish general were received with scorn and indignation. To his first letter their only answer was, "The fowler plays sweet notes on his pipe while he spreads his net for the bird." Further letters brought the spirited reply that "when they had eaten their dogs and cats, they still had a left arm to cut off while the right drove the tyrant from their walls ; and rather than become slaves they would set fire to their city."

But the people were not entirely cut off from their friends. Carrier-pigeons flew to and fro

with messages under their wings. The Prince of Orange was preparing a fleet of Zealanders to bring relief to the city. Approach from the land was impossible. Therefore the States in full council decreed that the dikes should be cut, the sluices opened, and the waters flow over the rich lands of Rhynland and Schieland. And on the rush of the waters, which would roll to the very walls of Leyden, the patriot ships would sail over the land to the gates of the city. "Better a ruined land than a lost land," was the undaunted cry.

Buoyed by this promise, Leyden waited and watched. Hardly able to move, the weak and starving burghers dragged themselves daily to the top of a high tower, and strained feverish eyes toward the south. No man was allowed to leave the gates. Women and children died by the hundreds. The plague broke out and carried off its thousands. And still the people watched. For not alone the fate of Leyden, but the fate of Holland and the future of the nation, hung upon the unflinching courage of those brave Leydenese.

Everything that men could do had been done. The dikes along the Meuse and the Yssel had been broken, the gates of the rivers had been unlocked, the sluices at Rotterdam, Schiedam, and Delftshaven opened. The hope of the Netherlands rested on so small a thing as the wind. Rarely has a whole nation watched the weather-

vane in such unbearable suspense. "Northeast, still northeast," was the despairing cry. A steady, strong wind held the waters of the rivers in their beds, pushed them back with a hand of iron.

There was no food left in Leyden. Men tottered in the streets, and were taunted by their enemies, "Go up to the tower, ye Beggars, and see if the ocean is coming over the dry land to your relief!" And the ocean came. Suddenly the wind swept around, from northeast to west and to southwest. Released, the waters rushed over fertile fields and growing crops, over gardens and villages. The fleet was ready. Two hundred flat-bottomed boats laden with provisions and ammunition, and the squadron of the terrible Sea-Beggars, the fiercest of the clan, had been massed at Rotterdam and Delft. Now they sailed in on the rising waters.

Fort after fort was stormed, barrier after barrier broken, dikes carried, villages burned, and still the fleet advanced, through the gaps, riding on the ocean. The wind changed and shifted, rose and fell; calms and shallow waters held them back, but nothing could dishearten the wild Sea-Beggars. By one way or another Admiral Boisot was determined to force a passage. A large inland mere delayed them several days, then the heavy barrier called the "Kirk-way" forced them back. The water fell, the fleet lay motionless;

even the admiral despaired. Suddenly a violent tempest broke loose, the sea poured in, and again the ships swept onward with the rushing waves.

All was not yet overcome. There was a fierce battle in the dead of night, there were shallows where the dauntless Beggars, maimed and hacked as they were, leaped overboard and pushed the ships by main strength into deep water. There were two powerful forts, defended by artillery and troops. The guns alone could have destroyed the small vessels of the flotilla. But the Water-Beggars were on them — the wild Zealanders who went to mortal combat — and the Spaniards fled in all directions, fled into the flood, where hundreds met their death. But they could not escape the Beggars. Dashing after them along dikes and into waves, the pirates fell upon the fugitives with harpoon, boat-hook, and dagger.

One fortress remained between the fleet and Leyden, strong and formidable, filled with soldiers and frowning guns. Boisot anchored out of gunshot and waited for the dawn. Little more than a mile distant lay the headquarters of the besieging army ; two hundred and fifty yards ahead stood starving, pest-ridden Leyden, heroic Leyden.

The Zealand admiral was prepared for a fierce struggle. He had sent carrier-pigeons to the city with messages of hope and encouragement ; and he had suggested a sortie from the gates. At last the first rays of dawn spread a gray light over the

flooded country, over broken dikes, drowned villages, ruined fields, over the city, and fort, and flotilla. Everywhere was silence. Not a sound came from the fort. The admiral was distrustful; the city feared treachery. The uncertainty was oppressive.

Suddenly a boy was seen perched on the topmost tower of the fort. He was waving his cap frantically and triumphantly in the air. And a man waded to his neck out toward the fleet to carry the news. In the dead of night the boy, who was now the first to climb the ramparts of the fort, had seen strange things. He had seen a line of moving lights, and dark forms creeping stealthily away. Boylike, he leaped to the conclusion that the Spaniards were fleeing. And then to prove the thing he offered to swim alone to the redoubt. This was an adventure, a real, flesh-and-blood adventure, to thrill the soul of any boy. With quick strokes he flew through the water, scrambled up the wall, climbed to the top of the battlements. The fort was empty. The soldiers, panic-stricken at sight of the Sea-Beggars, had joined the main part of the troops, and the whole Spanish army was in full retreat.

On the morning of the 3d of October, 1574, the fleet sailed into Leyden. The scenes that followed were full of pathos. Lines of emaciated and tottering creatures pressed around their rugged, swarthy deliverers, with the tears stream-



ing down their cheeks. The emotion was intense, and when the entire population marched in procession to the church headed by the admiral, and joined together in singing the thanksgiving hymn, it was more than the patient and heroic sufferers could bear. Those who had stood unflinchingly at the very gates of death, now broke down in the face of their deliverance.

Leyden was relieved ! The Beggars of the Sea had saved Holland and were the heroes of the day. The memory of the wild pirate patriots dwelt long in men's minds. They continued to carry on their successful raids and were not dispersed until the end of the war, and such was the terror they inspired, that fifteen years later Spanish crews deserted and fled before the last remnant of the Holland and Zealand freebooters.

## CHAPTER X

### FASHIONABLE PIRACY

[PIRACY was a fashionable pursuit among the dashing young blades of the English court during the sixteenth century. The reigns of "Bloody" Mary and of Elizabeth gave a great boom to the profession, and the Channel became a floating gold field as attractive as ever California or South Africa was to the daring and reckless adventurer. Queen Elizabeth rather encouraged the unlawful spoils system, and helped the business by showing a strong secret sympathy with the gay freebooters. With a decided liking for excitement and for games of hazard, and a natural love of intrigue, she took delight in the escapades of her unruly subjects. And although careful not to avow her interest in public, she was a patroness and stanch admirer of the sea-adventurers. Under a *nom de guerre*, so to speak, or at least on the sly, she was fond of taking shares in different pirate stock companies, and enjoyed with keen zest the excitement of speculating now and then in Spanish gold or French wine.]

[Many men who afterward held high and trusted positions under the government had been noted freebooters for a season and from motives of their own. It was quite the vogue to buy a vessel, collect a crew of corsairs, and haunt the water-highways.] And because a Sir This or Lord That had once plundered rich merchant ships it was not held up against him. If he was clever, and ready to play the part of courtier or statesman as ably as he had played the part of pirate, he was sure of a warm welcome at court, and when he was tired of sailing the waves, and felt like settling down to a respectable career, he knew that many doors were open to him.

The result was that the Channel teemed with rovers and their nests riddled the shores of England, Ireland, and the Islands. Catholics and Protestants who fled from persecution, sons of noblemen whose fortunes were at a low ebb, even young merchants with ambitions to rise, took up the profitable profession of piracy. As a rule, there was a faint attempt made to cover unlawful buccaneering with a thin veil of legality in the form of letters of marque, but the veil was so thin that one could see through it, and it failed to disguise the true marauder.] When once the sea-wolves were let loose on the Channel, their ravenous appetite for plunder made them color blind, and neither the French, Belgian, Spanish, Dutch, or even British flag was any protection to mer-

chant vessels. They preyed upon the traders of their own country with as free a conscience as they hunted Spanish galleons.

[The rovers soon grew to be a strong water-republic, with headquarters and bases of operation scattered along the southern coast of England, hidden among the creeks and inlets of the Irish shores, and dotted among the impregnable reefs of the Scilly Isles. For not only had queens befriended the water-thieves, but even during the previous reign of Edward VI they had been patronized and formed into a powerful band by the high-admiral of the kingdom, Lord Seymour of Sudleye.]

This ambitious and intriguing noble had reasons of his own for favoring pirates, and his office as chief of the Admiralty gave him many opportunities to do them a service. When now and then a pirate crew was captured and brought in for justice, they always managed to get their freedom instead of a hanging. A few sparkling diamonds and rubies presented to the admiral and his followers easily bought the release of noted buccaneers. [But even a rich bribe was hardly necessary to win Seymour's favor, for he went out of his way to help the business. He purchased their favorite lair, the group of the Scilly Isles, off Land's End and the Lizard, and thus became the proprietor of a vast robber den.

There, among the rocky labyrinths, he estab-

lished a strong pirate community. It was a convenient and inaccessible refuge. The rovers, with their small, light fleets of twenty or thirty sail, could sweep down upon the slow and heavily laden merchantmen, pillage the cargoes, and dance back among their reefs and coves. Lord Seymour was counting on this safe and sure refuge in case his intricate conspiracies should one day bring him into trouble. If he could not be husband to England's queen, he might at least be king of the corsairs and hold his court among the treacherous shoals of his island dominion.]

Encouraged by patronage in high places, the pirates flourished, and not only scoured the Channel from end to end, but spread over to the French coast, raced up to the North Sea, and ran out into the Atlantic Ocean. As they grew in numbers they grew in insolence. They hung around the harbors in open day and carried on their business with frank presumption. So great was the fear they inspired that they were left unmolested. They lounged about the streets in broad daylight, bought their provisions in the market-place, and fitted out their ships.

There were two notorious pirates, Thompson and Stevenson, who dropped anchor in the harbor of Cork; and although proclamations were out for their arrest, no one dared to interfere with them. The country people supplied them freely with provisions, and they carried on their trade with-

out opposition. Even the mayor seemed to be paralyzed with alarm, and had not the courage to oppose them, for fear they would set fire to the town. So they had everything their own way, and carried matters with a high hand.

But sometimes the pirates had the worst of the bargain, and met with an appropriate end on the yard-arm. The poor little seaport town of Kinsale, on the south coast of Ireland, was having a hard time in the summer of 1548. The town lay not far from Cork, at the head of a narrow inlet, and depended for its prosperity on the trade of English and French vessels that came and went in its harbor. But it so happened that a gang of English pirates was holding high revels in its quiet waters. The condition of the town was bad enough without the unnecessary addition of unbidden robber guests, for pestilence had carried off hundreds of its men, and "we have a wide and empty town," wrote the counsel in a pathetic letter. The country was laid waste, and the neighboring people were "naughty" and unruly.

It was not for what they could find in an empty town that Richard Colle and his crew of twenty men haunted the entrance to the harbor in what the venerable counsel called a "spinache," and which was probably a pinnace. But it was for the plunder they could steal from visiting vessels. Ship after ship that was bringing provisions or merchandise to Kinsale was captured and pillaged,

and the poor people were not only prisoners in their own town, but were starved at that. No "victuals" and no succor could reach them, and they were powerless to drive the intruders from their coast.

Meanwhile succor was arriving from an unlooked-for source. Ten days after the counsel's urgent appeal to the Lord Deputy, a large French vessel with a crew of a hundred men came to Kinsale. As she sailed into the harbor, Colle fell upon her, as he had upon many unsuspecting boats. But this time his adversary was too strong for him. After a short and lively struggle the pirate "spinache" was captured, and the "naughty" crew met their fate on the Frenchman's yard-arm.

It was not often, however, that the pirates met with the end they deserved, and their mysterious black luggers stole in and out among the dim shadows of reefs and creeks, darting stealthily upon their victims, and shooting back with rich loads to their nests. Four hundred adventurers roamed the Straits at the head of wild and desperate crews. Some of the highest families in England gave their names to pirate chiefs. Among these names we find a Carew, a Tremayne, a Horsey, a Killigrew, a Cobham — men who afterward held high positions of trust under Queen Elizabeth.

The rough crews cared for nothing but plunder. Many of them were fishermen whose business had

been ruined. Others were coasting traders whose calling was no longer profitable or possible. All these took to piracy as an employment that satisfied their lawless spirit.

But with the leaders there was something behind it all, something more than the highwayman's desire to rob. The age was one of restlessness, of adventure, of romance. New things were happening in religion, in commerce, in discoveries. The world was unsettled, and the spirit of disquiet spread among all classes. Occupations were taken away, lands confiscated, property seized, and the British knights and squires, with their national love of the sea and of enterprise, exchanged their castles for their ships when they were driven from home.

On the water they were free to fight for their religion and their country, even when their rulers were not at war. They could revenge Spanish insults and Catholic crimes. If Englishmen were tortured by the Inquisition and starved in foul dungeons, they could in return sew up Spanish crews in their own sail and throw them into the ocean. As the spirit of lawless reprisals became a habit, other lawless habits were soon taken up, and it was easy to turn from the pursuit of a Spanish gold ship to the chase of a Flemish trader.

The burghers, too, were not to be outdone by the lords. To an equal love of adventure they added an even stronger love of gold and a good



eye for business. The merchants of Plymouth, Exeter, and the Isle of Wight soon learned to combine commerce and buccaneering. They sent out large ships with strong crews, armed with frowning guns and well stocked with arms and ammunition — ships that might well have passed for men-of-war.

Armed merchantmen had become a necessity, for commerce was unprotected save by her own guns, and the English navy was still unborn. Trade had developed with a rush, but as yet there was no regular fighting marine. In times of peace the few government vessels were mostly put out of commission, and the large vessels of the traders that had been transformed into men-of-war were sold. Merchants were forced to depend upon their own resources for the protection of their cargoes from attack, and they soon began to arm their ships for defence. From defence to offence is but a step, and they were now fast learning to increase the number and the weight of their guns, and to add to their fleets two or three swift cruisers whose mission was not to trade but to take.

Now that the fisheries were dead, and the navy unformed, there were only two roads open to mariners, — commerce and piracy. A combination of the two was profitable and more or less safe, and pirate-trading grew to be a favorite business. We have only to look at the list of the corsair

chiefs of commerce, which includes such names as the Hawkineses, the Drakes, the Frobishers, to see how widespread was the piratical spirit. And just as the powerful navy of Holland grew out of the fierce Beggars of the Sea, the keel timber of the English navy was laid by the dashing pirate lords and pirate traders who swept the Channel and were masters of the narrow sea.

## CHAPTER XI

### AN ALL-ROUND ADVENTURER

“If I should tell his story — pride was all his glory,  
And *lusty Stukely* he was called in court.”

[IF the wild and stormy Stukely, the vain and ambitious Stukely, could have known that he was to figure as the hero of several ballads and of two long plays, one of which is supposed to show the hand of Shakespeare, his pride would have been more than satisfied. The exploits of pirates have been sung and praised, but never have they been so glorified as have the dashing, reckless deeds of the English captain. He was the idol of the popular fancy, the subject of fantastic tales and traditions, a sort of half-mythical, half-real desperado whose feats were made to follow the flights of the bard.

Stukely was no common pirate ; he was the hero of the military spirit, the daredevil genius of war. He was a courtier, traveller, plotter, adventurer, and gentleman of fortune. He was admired by princes and petted by kings. He served England, France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy. He had dreams of founding an empire and

ruling a state.] There were, in fact, very few limits to his vainglorious ambition and to his dishonest plots.

“By birth a wealthy clothier’s son — deeds of wonder hath  
he done,  
To purchase him a long and lasting praise.”

But here the poet drew upon his fancy, for Stukely was no clothier’s child, but the third son of a brave and distinguished knight, Sir Hugh Stukely, who came of a wealthy and powerful ancient family of Devonshire. Not only was the family a prominent one, but it was connected by blood and by marriage with many strong and influential names. The whole spirit of the house was military and loyal. Uncles and brothers and cousins were either sailors or soldiers, and held service under the crown.

Thomas Stukely was born at a stormy period, in 1520, under the reign of King Henry VIII, and he was to see the sway of two kings and two queens, alternating from fierce Protestants to bloody Catholics. Those were times of sudden changes and fiery spirits. Men caught hold of life as best they could, and often in not very honest ways. Stukely went to London to seek his fortune, and there entered the family of the Duke of Suffolk as a retainer. He followed his master in different enterprises, and was present with him at the siege and fall of Boulogne in 1544.

In the following year the Duke of Suffolk died, and Stukely entered the service of the Earl of Hertford. He had powerful friends in the army, and through their influence was appointed to the office of king's standard-bearer at Boulogne, for which honor he received a stipend of six shillings and eight pence a day.

When Stukely was about thirty years old, in 1550, he lost his position as standard-bearer by the surrender of Boulogne to the French, and then returned to the English court in search of new fields for his ability. His natural fondness for conspiracies and intrigue attracted him to the Protector, the Duke of Somerset, and he attached himself to this unscrupulous lord. During the next two years young Stukely, already a dashing and swaggering gallant, was used by his master in missions to France and plots in England which were decidedly compromising. And when Somerset was thrown into the Tower in 1551, Stukely fled to France.

There he soon succeeded in winning the favor of the Constable de Montmorency, who admired the brilliant talents of the young English soldier, and introduced him to the French king. For the next year Stukely devoted his aspiring energies to the service of Henry II, and to his own interests, with such success that he soon won the trust and friendship of his royal patron.

But his restless nature was already astir, and at

the end of a year he was longing for a sight of English shores. The risk of returning to his own country was enough to be exciting, but not enough to be dangerous, and had in it the very diet he craved. With an eye to caution, however, he provided himself with a letter from King Henry II of France to his beloved "cousin, gossip, and ally," King Edward VI of England. It was a warm and urgent letter in which Henry most affectionately and heartily recommended for favor his "dear and good friend" Thomas Stukely, "who has ever behaved himself well and valiantly."

With this powerful letter of recommendation and character voucher, Stukely was received at court, although still with some suspicion. Ever a bold player, he now threw down his trump card, whether moved by self-interest or by loyalty as an English subject will perhaps never be known. At all events, he divulged an intricate plot of the French king to seize Calais, land two armies at Dartmouth and Falmouth, and invade England from north and south. If this information were true, it was worth a fortune to Stukely, and the favor and gratitude of the English king.

But if Stukely had expected a rich reward, he had counted without the talents of an intriguer more artful than himself; and, instead of seeing all his debts paid, as he had hoped, he suddenly found himself chained in the Tower. This was a most unexpected and unfortunate turn of fortune's

wheel. The Duke of Northumberland had hit upon the clever scheme of frankly telling the French king of the strange tales told against him, and asking him if they were true. Henry II, as was to be expected, hotly denied the story, called Stukely a liar and a slanderer, and protested his own good faith. Poor Stukely, himself a plotter, was thus made the tool and victim of two more consummate plotters than himself. But he was learning lessons in dishonesty and intrigue from which he profited later.

It was not for long that Stukely clanked his chains in the Tower. A few months, or at most a year, found him again in the open, with fortunes no better than when he had begun his career, but with a load of debts in addition. He had gained more experience than money, and money was what he most wanted, for he was an extravagant fellow, fond of pleasure and gayety. After a number of experiments, including a stay at the court of Emperor Charles V and a two years' service under the Duke of Savoy, he finally decided to try his hand at buccaneering.

Piracy was at its height. It was profitable and popular. The people looked upon it with secret favor; it appealed to the spirit of adventure and freedom that had been let loose. The only wonder is that such a lawless free-lance as Stukely had not already started out as a pirate chieftain.

With a jaunty barque and a rough and motley

crew, the former gallant scoured the Channel and the Straits. Stukely's piracies soon became a byword for their daring and insolence. French traders and Flemish merchants were waylaid and plundered, the crews sent to the bottom, and the goods hurried into the deep bays of the south coast of Ireland; for Stukely's hiding-places were near Cork and Kinsale, the favorite lairs of many English pirates. It was natural, too, for him to take refuge in the land of St. Patrick, as he was not only of the Catholic faith, but had strong connections in Ireland through his mother's family.

Not content with enriching himself by plunder, he bought for a nominal sum the interest in some vast estates near Cork. The land had for a long time been quarrelled over, and bestowed in turn on different families. It was not a fruitful possession, but Stukely had the greed for land, and coveted wide domains and broad dependencies. His new acquisition was probably more of a drain on his resources than a gain, for he soon ran out of funds, and his next business experiment was in the matrimonial line. He went up to London, and there won the favor of a rich alderman's daughter.

“When she his person spied — he could not be denied,  
So brave a gentleman he was to see.”

The lady — whether she was fair or not the ballad does not tell us — who was captivated by



the dashing charms of her lover, little realized that it was her father's bright gold he coveted. Her disillusionment came not long after their marriage, when

“Stukely he presum'd

To spend a hundred pound a day in waste.

The greatest gallants in the land — had Stukely's purse at their command.

Thus merrily the time away he passed.”

Things went from bad to worse, and, after the alderman's premature death, the reckless son-in-law squandered the fortune of a life's making. Everything went in pleasure and feasting, — gold, jewels, lands, and even his wife's clothes.

“Thus wasting lands and living — by this lawless giving

At length he sold the pavement of the yard,

Which covered was with blocks of tin. . . .”

When there was nothing left to spend, Stukely said, “I'll go my way,” and with his usual cheerfulness turned to see what new prize the world could give him. It must have taken him several years to run through his father-in-law's wealth, for he had been living in London four twelve-months after his marriage, and had filled several public offices, and taken part in more than one intrigue. Not until 1562 was he driven by the weakness of his purse to seek other ventures.

Stukely's new project was more ambitious and was more deeply plotted than any of his former escapades. He proposed to Queen Elizabeth that

he should equip an expedition to colonize Florida. She favored the idea and helped him to fit out a squadron, contributing provisions, arms, and ammunition. Five ships and a pinnace were well armed, and manned with a mixed crew of rough mariners and stalwart soldiers. Provided with a license from the crown that authorized him to make discoveries and to found a settlement in Florida, Stukely set sail from Havre, which was then an English possession, and stretched westward through the Channel.

It is amusing to read of the plots and counterplots in connection with this fanciful expedition to Florida. Queen Elizabeth was playing with a new and dangerous toy, which was to bewitch her and involve her in much trouble while it brought her large profits. She was for the first time tasting the unlawful joys of buccaneering, and her greed, her love of intrigue, her spirit of adventure, were all allured by the popular trade. Under the thin disguise of an expedition to Florida she was taking shares in a piratical venture.

Meanwhile Stukely was cherishing his own secret schemes. He coveted a realm, but a realm nearer home. An official letter authorized him to stop at certain ports on the coast of Ireland in case he was diverted from his direct voyage by unfavorable winds. Elizabeth looked upon this as a loophole for him to hang around the Channel and plunder Spanish galleons or French traders.

Stukely looked upon it as an excuse for getting a foothold in Ireland and exciting the people to insurrection.

But the farce was kept up, and Stukely promised to write to the queen after he was settled in his Florida kingdom, "as one prince writes unto another," calling her his "loving sister." He was to live and die a braggart.

So although the ditty runs, —

"Have over the waters to Florida  
Farewell good London now,"

he deliberately turned his prow toward Ireland. Settling himself comfortably in the harbors of Cork and Kinsale, he slipped out in his four-hundred-ton barque to capture gold ships and wine fleets from Panama and Bordeaux. He was unquestionably a success at piracy, the only profession of which he was a real master. He had the very character suited to a bold robber chieftain, — the dash, the swagger, the reckless lying, the selfishness, the cold-hearted rascality, the plausible ways, and a certain lustiness and power that deceive and captivate. He was the adventurer through and through.

French, Spanish, Flemish, Scotch, Dutch merchant vessels fell into his hands. A Zealand ship, the *Trinity*, on its way to Biscay, was caught and robbed of linen and tapestry to the worth of three thousand pounds. The *Fortune*, bound from Nantes

to Antwerp, fell in with Stukely off Ushant, and was carried off, robbed, and sent to the bottom.

If he had only kept to piracy, he would have been one of the cleverest of sea-wolves. But his restless brain was forever brewing bigger schemes. He aspired to something greater than a corsair kingdom. If not an Irish realm, at least an Irish dukedom. To excite Ireland against her heretic queen, to make her a dependency of Spain, and himself Philip's viceroy, — this was Stukely's dream. But his machinations were discovered; he was arrested and thrown into Dublin Castle, and there kept a close prisoner for seventeen weeks.

It seems to have been as easy in Queen Elizabeth's time to get out of prison as to be thrown in; at least for some, especially adventurers and pirates. By October, 1569, Stukely was set free on parole, and some months later received his pardon. But Ireland was no longer a safe place for him, and he laid his plans for escape. He bought a ship and prepared it for sea; laid in stores of wheat, beans, and water; and shipped a stout crew of the best English mariners. On a fair day in April, 1570, he spread his sail to the breeze and put out to sea. And then, instead of heading for the coast of England, as expected, he sped southward to Spain.

At this point Stukely bids farewell to piracy. The next eight years were spent in Spain and Italy, where the would-be Duke of Ireland amused

himself by plotting and lying. He represented himself as a man of large influence and strong position, who could with ease lead a successful insurrection in Ireland. King Philip, who at first showered honors upon the Irish adventurer, finally turned cold and refused his support. At Rome, however, Stukely had better success, and after his visit to the Pope was able to add after his name a string of more or less empty titles, which at least satisfied his vanity. Knight, Baron, Viscount, Earl, Marquis, and General were certainly enough to fulfil the aspirations of a title hunter.

But Stukely was, at least, in earnest in his desire to lead an invasion of Ireland, and in 1578 he had so far succeeded that he set sail from Genoa in the *San Juan* with a troop of eight hundred well-armed and well-trained Italian soldiers. But the trouble with him was that he never carried a thing through to the finish. Putting in to Lisbon harbor for repairs, he heard of a battle to be fought in Africa between the king of Portugal and the emperor of Morocco. King Sebastian happened to be in need of recruits, and with promises of future help and a salary of a thousand ducats a month, he easily persuaded Stukely to join in the African enterprise.

At Alcazar, on the 4th of August, 1578, was fought the tragical battle at which fell "three kings in re and one in spe." Stukely, with his

Italians, was in the centre of the Portuguese line and bore the brunt of the fighting. The Portuguese army was entirely destroyed, the emperor of Morocco fell, King Sebastian was killed, and Stukely died valiantly, leading a desperate charge.

“Stukely’s life thus ended — was after death befriended,

And like a soldier buried gallantly.

Where now there stands upon the grave — a stately temple builded brave

With golden turrets piercing to the sky.”

## CHAPTER XII

### ROVERS OF THE CHANNEL

ALTHOUGH we have grown accustomed to hear the praise of pirates sung, it is with not a little mild surprise that we read the summing up of Sir Peter Carew's life, written more than three hundred years ago by an acquaintance, if not a friend of the honorable gentleman. Sir Peter, who died a justice of the peace and *custos rotulorum*, was spoken of, in a little extempore funeral speech, as a most worthy and noble knight, whose faith was never stained, whose truth was never spotted, and whose valor was never daunted. In addition to this he is said to have been just in his dealings with all men, liberal to the point of believing that "it is better to give than to take," brilliant and clever in mind, valiant and able in war, an admirer of Cicero, and the equal of Publius Scipio and Paulus Æmilius.

In act he was never dishonest, and he did not "inordinately" seek other men's goods! Add to this that he was a man well put together, strong and agile, broad, big-boned, and firm-sinewed, with black hair and a thick, bushy beard, and we can picture to ourselves a very striking sort of

person, whose appearance rather belied his angelic character, and who must have looked like a very fierce sort of saint. It is, at all events, a satisfaction to feel that there was at least one virtuous, respectable, and not "inordinate" pirate, a really high-minded and noble gentleman, among so many who were the reverse.

These English rovers differed from others of the confraternity in that they were amateur and not professional robbers. With them piracy was a sort of diversion, not a vocation; they took it up as we would wheeling, for two or three seasons, and then dropped it when the novelty had worn off. Amateurs never take their accomplishments or their occupations in earnest; however adept or clever they may become, the chances are that painting, or piracy, or philanthropy will be laid aside for some newer fad. Now, Sir Peter's business in life was to be justice of the peace and *custos rotulorum*; his interest in yachting and in acquiring to a moderate degree the property of others was merely a phase.

Whatever Sir Peter may have become in later years, he was not exactly well behaved or discreet as a boy. But he was bright and precocious, and his father thought with parental fondness that he was destined to be a great and good man. William, Baron of Carew, belonged to a noble family of ancient lineage who owned wide lands and brave castles in Wales and Devon. Of



several sons, Peter was the youngest and also the most promising, so his father decided to have him thoroughly educated, setting great hopes on his future advancement.

When Peter was twelve he was sent to the grammar school at Exeter and put under the care of Thomas Hunt, a draper and alderman. Although later the list of Sir Peter's attainments included French and Italian, geometry and mathematics, politics, law, and the science of war, his love of knowledge had not yet developed at the age of twelve, and he proved himself to be a refractory pupil, who gave much concern and trouble to his protector, the respectable draper. He disliked work, and had a strong aversion to the head of the school, a man called Freer, who was a hard and cruel master.

Not that the usual routine of study was difficult or heavy in those days, to judge by the report of a tutor who was instructing his pupil in good letters and honest manners. The list of the day's work included a dialogue of Erasmus on the devotion of children, two hours of writing exercises, and a reading lesson in Fabian's *Chronicle*. Instruction on the lute and virginals, or "playing at weapons," and a ride enlivened by tales from Greek and Roman history, filled in the rest of the day. French and bookkeeping were sometimes added; and during the recreation hours the boys learned to hawk, hunt, and shoot.

It is not likely, however, that the boys of the Exeter high school were allowed such a pleasant variety of study, or many hours of riding, hawking, and hunting. Peter, at all events, found the days dreary, and turned truant as often as he dared. More and more frequently was his bench empty, while he was ranging freely over town and country. Freer complained forcibly to the draper, and the unhappy Hunt would scour the streets in search of the runaway. One day Peter was discovered on top of the city walls, and as Mr. Hunt approached he scrambled to the very summit of one of the high turrets; perched on the battlements, he threatened to throw himself headlong from the tower if his pursuer tried to catch him, "and then," said he, "I shall break my neck, and thou shalt be hanged, because thou makest me to leap down."

Mr. Hunt seems to have been impressed by the logic of this argument, and gave up the chase for that day. But he wisely concluded that the boy needed the training of a firm hand, and sent for his father. Sir William arrived post-haste at Exeter and did not hesitate to use strong and primitive methods in dealing with his unruly son. Peter was tied to a leash, and was led by a servant through the streets of Exeter as if he were one of his father's dogs. He was then driven home in the same ignominious way to Sir William's castle in Devon. There he was coupled to a foxhound,

and left for many days to the whims of his four-footed messmate and playmate.

But no punishment, however humiliating, could instil into the wild and independent Peter the desire to study ; and when he was afterward taken by his father on probation to London and again put to school, he had not mended his ways. He loved liberty better than learning, and neglected his books. The schoolmaster urged Sir William to choose another profession for his lively and wilful son, who could never be moulded into a scholar, and the days of Peter's schooling came to an end.

After this, his boyhood was full of vicissitudes. He was made page to a French noble and carried off to France. But as his smart clothes grew threadbare, his new master's favor seemed to wear out with them. Ragged Peter, turned out of the chamber, was relegated to the stable, and fell to be lackey and then muleteer. As he was playing one day with his companions, the horse-boys, before the court gate, a dashing horseman rode up and dismounted. It was John Carew, a distant cousin of Sir William, and he proved to be the prince in the fairy tale. He gave the French nobleman a sound scolding, carried Peter off to court, where he was educated like a gentleman, and then took him to the wars.

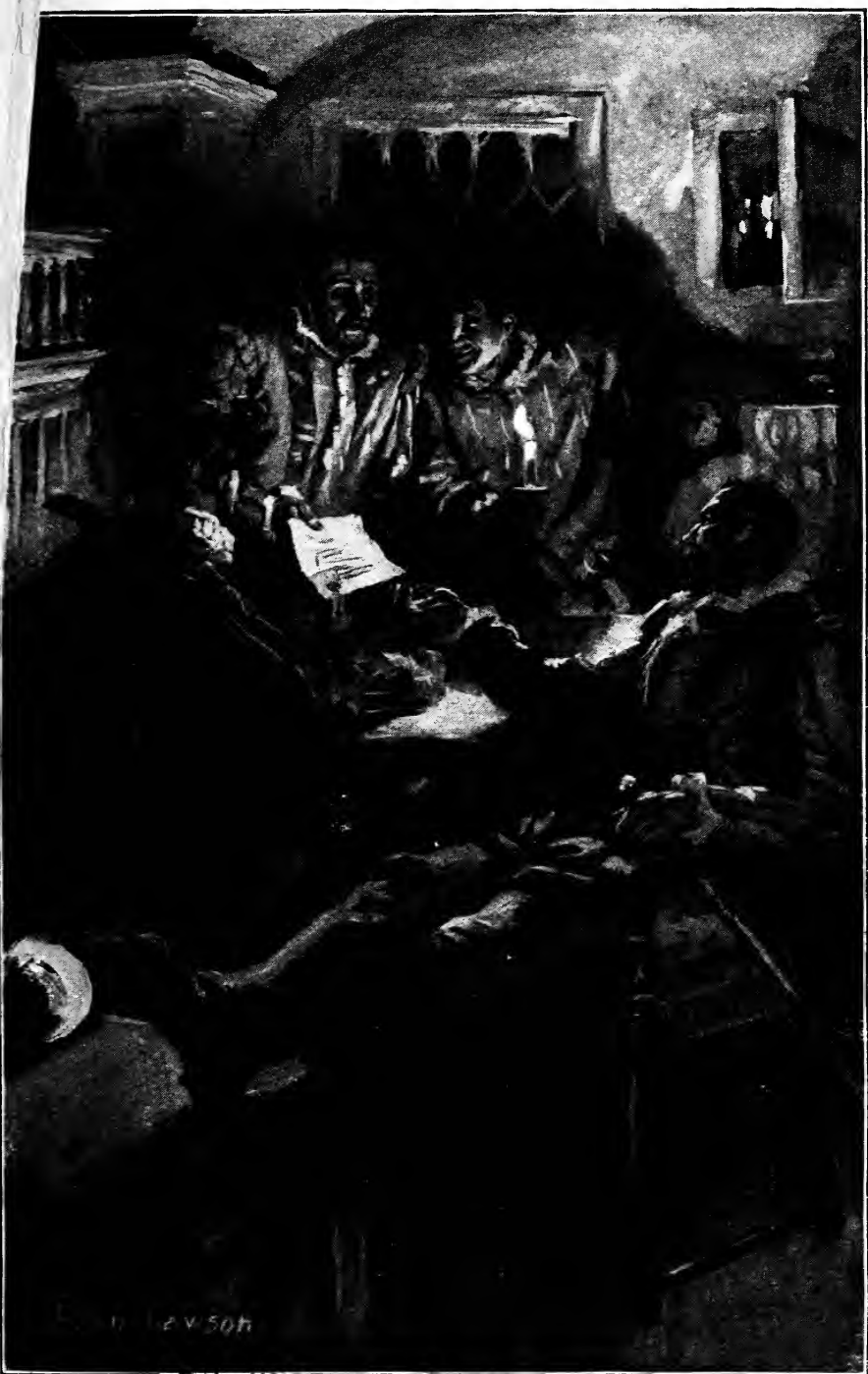
After an absence of six years, Peter, now a handsome and gallant youth, clever, witty, and

spirited, returned to England and to his family, presented himself at court, and rose rapidly in royal favor.

This was the boyhood of the man who was afterward gentleman in waiting to the king, naval commander, lord high commissioner, and adventurer ; who fought against the French, broke his lance at tourneys, conspired, fled, roved the Channel, disciplined troops, and repressed piracy.

It was after he had become deeply involved in the conspiracy against Queen Mary's Spanish marriage, and had been forced to fly to France, that he started his piratical cruises. Unscrupulous, strong, energetic, he gathered around him the hot-headed young English rebels who, like himself, had sworn to keep the prince of Spain from English shores. To Caen in Normandy came the Strangways, Killebrews, and Tremaynes, with rough, sturdy crews of Plymouth and Weymouth mariners. The Huguenot French were eager to provide them with ships, arms, and ammunition ; almost two hundred vessels were collected in the ports of Normandy and Brittany under the command of Carew.

With this fleet of fast-sailing boats, led by men of that mixed brew of patriot, pirate, and privateer, Carew held the Straits between France and England. All the disaffected joined his flag. They planned big schemes of landing in Essex and the Isle of Wight, and raising the standard of



He gathered around him the hot-headed young English rebels



revolt. Meanwhile they plundered freely whatever fell into their hands, and their swift sea-hawks fastened their grappling talons into all vessels that dared to run the gauntlet of the Channel.

Scotch, Spaniards, and Portuguese, Flemish, Dutch, and Catholic French, lawful traders and peaceful coasters, fishing fleets, gold fleets, and wine fleets, fell victims to the light, nimble-footed, ambiguous vessels that sailed under English colors. Strength of arms and strength of guns were their title to the booty of the whole Catholic world; they established their rights and made their demands at the mouths of their cannon. The Huguenot storehouses at La Rochelle groaned under the weight of Catholic cargoes. Not content with intercepting merchantmen in harbors and channels, the pirates boldly dove into Spanish ports, or plunged out to sea in pursuit of fleeing traders. The water crusade throve, and the war between the old and the new religions, that was kept simmering for years by the governments of the rival countries, was carried to the boiling-point by the illegal rovers of the sea.

[After seeing Carew the chief and leader of the rebel pirates, it seems odd to find him, ten years later, empowered by Queen Elizabeth to clear the Irish seas and English waters of freebooters and marauders. He was to fit out a small, swift squadron, run down the thieves in their haunts,

seize and destroy their ships. It was pitting pirates against pirates, for the men were to receive no pay, but were to help themselves to as much plunder as they could find, as a recompense for their services. But Carew had too much sympathy for adventurers to throw much heart into the affair, and the wolves of Devonshire and Berhaven suffered little at his hands. The expedition failed to exterminate the pirates of the narrow sea.

The business of piracy continued to thrive, and Queen Elizabeth, while publicly denouncing it, really grew to depend on the vigilance of her pirate subjects to protect her shores from Spanish invasion. The rovers became the defenders of the realm.

Many were the young, brave, and unscrupulous men, ready to serve the queen for the love of England, or rove the Channel for the love of gold, adventure, and revenge. There were scores among the younger sons of the best families in England, who had grown up into irresponsible, irregular youths, and were indiscriminately defenders of the faith, soldiers on land, and pirates on the sea. Ned Horsey was one of these lawless knights-errant, one year sacking towns and plundering ships, the owner of heavily armed piratical vessels that scoured not only the narrow seas, but ventured over the ocean and ravaged the Spanish main ; next year knighted as Sir Edward Horsey



and appointed governor of the Isle of Wight ; in 1569 leading a cavalry troop against Catholic rebels ; in 1577 sent on an embassy to the Netherlands.

The Isle of Wight itself, over which ruled the pirate patriot Sir Edward, was a recognized storehouse for plundered goods. Captain Sorrey brought in his prizes and sold the stolen cargoes. Whether saffron, herrings, gold, or silks — all found a market among the merchants whose land bordered the coast. There was a broad impartiality in wares, — cochineal, silver, pearls, wine, wool, cheese, and meat ; everything fed the illicit trade, and the pirates were not fastidious choosers. They felt that the sea and all that was in it or on it belonged to Englishmen.

Nor were they more scrupulous about nations or creeds than about goods. Protestant Dutchmen were robbed as well as Catholic Spaniards.

Cornelius Williamson of Dort is sailing out of Yarmouth. He has bartered his Dutch wares for English goods, and has spread his sails for home. Scarcely is he outside of the harbor than an evil-looking, black lugger falls upon him. Wild and ruthless pirates swarm over the sides of the coaster ; the Dutch sailors are tied with ropes and thrown into the sea ; Cornelius himself is dropped eight times into the water, tied to a rope and with stones around his legs. Money, clothes, anchors,

cables, provisions, everything is looted and carried off to a neighboring inlet.

At Sandwich quay, in Poole harbor, in Portsmouth roads, in Thames waters, in the Solent, the Channel, the Straits, everywhere, the corsairs held the way, and robbed at pleasure.

Faint, half-hearted attempts were made to suppress them. But the queen sympathized with them, and the people helped them. They were looked upon as heroes and religious enthusiasts. Bitter complaints from Spain and France sometimes resulted in the arrest of some notorious adventurer, but never was the terrible punishment of piracy carried out. The ruthless Cobham, son of Lord Cobham, who had chased, scuttled, and robbed an eighty-thousand-ducat ship and drowned the crew tied up in their own mainsail, was caught and tried for piracy. The penance was heavy. The prisoner, if sentenced, was laid on his back on the bare floor of a dark, damp dungeon; an enormous weight of iron was placed on his chest; three morsels of foul bread and three sips of stagnant water were to be his only nourishment until he died. But Cobham escaped the dreadful death, and was released, only to return to his depredations.

With examples such as these of lords and nobles turned rovers and escaping punishment, the commoner freebooters grew insolent and haunted the waterways. Poor fishermen were robbed of their

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herrings, cordage, nets, and food. Coasters were boarded by masked men and cleared of artillery, powder, and shot. Margate roads and even Greenwich waters under the very mouths of the queen's guns were as dangerous as the Straits. The English pirates were, in fact, masters of the sea, and were paving the way for that legal supremacy which was afterward won by the still unborn fleets and admirals of England.

## CHAPTER XIII

### A PACK OF WOLVES

IT is difficult to draw a sharp line between the English, Irish, and French pirates of the Channel. Together they were masters of the narrow waters, and levied blackmail on the commerce of the North and South, whose only road lay through the dangerous Straits. The French in the van, holding the entrance from the North Sea, the English in the centre, and the Irish bringing up the rear at the mouth of the Atlantic, — this was a formidable line of ambuscades that few could run in safety.

The English were the leaders in this robber warfare, and spread over to the coast of France, gathering mixed crews of English, French, and even Flemish. Then, too, they had favorite haunts along the southern shores of Ireland, safer and more retired than their nests on the chief highway, and there they enlisted stout mariners whose heavy brogue must have given a humorous tinge to the pirate speech, and made it seem more funny than ferocious.

Still, there were, both in Irish coves and French bays, a number of independent rover chiefs, who

kept themselves thoroughly national and distinct from their cosmopolitan brethren.

{The most famous of the true Irish sea-robbers was Granny O'Malley, a beldame of Connaught. She was the wife of a patriot chieftain, but was the stronger man of the two, and led her husband around with her wherever she chose to go, "by sea and land, being more than Mrs. Mate with him," as Sir Philip Sidney quaintly expressed it. Her nests were at Ballycroy, and hidden among the crevices of the Achil Isles, off the northwest coast of Ireland.

Granny was a thoroughgoing pirate, and carried on her depredations without any excuses of commissions or religion. Her three light galleys, manned by two hundred ruffian sailors, raided the coast, and were the terror of every skipper who dared to sail the western waters. In every desperate fight Granny came out victorious, and carried off rich plunder to her secret caves. The whole province was in dread of her; complaints were sent in to government that this "chief commander and director of thieves" had spoiled the province; but it was not until she had asserted her audacious mastery for several years that she was finally caught.

Once she had brought her galleys round to Cork and submitted herself to Sidney, placing her pirate ships at his disposal; but, uneasy of fetters, she had returned to her wild forays, and was

finally taken into custody. Released from her firm leadership, her husband, MacWilliam, and her son deserted the rebels, and went over to the English side. Fierce Granny herself was imprisoned at Limerick, and held in such "sure keeping" that she died.]

Among the sea-wolves whose lairs lay along the northern and western shores of France was the Catholic sailor, De Valle, who formed vast schemes for taking possession of Canada and establishing a French colony. The project seems to have met the same fate as Stukely's proposal to settle Florida. An order from the French government provided De Valle with ships, provisions, ammunition, arms, and stores of every kind. When his little squadron was well fitted out for sea, he collected a mixed and reckless crew among the sea-going population of the fishing towns; and to supply him with Canadian settlers the prison doors were opened, and crowds of jailbirds were shipped for the supposed voyage.

But no sooner had the anchors been slipped, and the ships were threading their way through the Channel, than De Valle changed his mind. His choice and motley assortment of daredevils were, he thought, better suited to boarding vessels and plundering cargoes than to settling down into peaceful tillers of the soil. So he nailed the black flag to his masthead and hovered around the English coast. Instead of seizing Canada, he

seized Lundy Island, and made it his base of operations. From there he fell upon coasting vessels and Bristol traders, or else he hung around the Isle of Wight and waylaid the merchant ships from Portsmouth as they sailed out of the Solent.

Some of De Valle's satellites came to a bad end. The sturdy fishermen of Clovelly proved a match for the pirates who had been prowling around their coves. Several boat-loads of the Clovelly men went out by night, surrounded one of the black luggers, burned it to the water's edge, and despatched the crew. De Valle himself was not of the number, for, like all pirate chiefs, he made a point of not being taken; but he disappeared before long from his haunts, driven out by his rivals, the Protestant rovers.

The Huguenot adventurers had a freer fling, for they were secretly encouraged by their English brothers. At all the ports of England they were supplied with food and stores of every kind, and they brought their stolen goods openly into Plymouth or Dover harbor, where they found a ready market for Catholic silks and jewels.

Pié de Pálo, or Jacques le Clerc, one of these irregular free-lances, sailed out of Havre under the mask of a commission from Condé, the Huguenot prince. Stretching across to the Lizard, he met a large Portuguese vessel, ran her down, and plundered her cargo, worth forty thousand ducats.

This account settled, he chased a ship bound from the Bay of Biscay to the North Sea, captured her, and found a rich booty of wool and iron.

Elated with success, and fresh from his last raid, Pié de Pálo caught sight of a Spanish merchantman entering the waters between Ushant and the Scilly Isles. Lying in wait for her, he suddenly swept down and drove her into Falmouth harbor, riddling her with shot. The Spaniard ran aground, and was promptly taken possession of by the energetic and vivacious Le Clerc.

The lively Frenchman did not let the seaweeds cling to his keel. Well pleased with his good fortune and eager for more, he hung close to the shore and watched for prey. It was winter, the wind was raging, the sea rough. Le Clerc felt sure that some passing traders would run for shelter into Falmouth harbor. And he was right. Five Portuguese vessels had labored up to Land's End, and there met with such violent blasts that they skirted the point and turned for safety into the quiet English harbor.

Soon they discovered their mistake; they had fallen into a hornets' nest instead of a refuge. Under press of sail they turned and fled, but Pié de Pálo plunged after them in hot pursuit. A lively race up Channel, the Spaniards showing clean heels, and the pirate close after them! The foremost ones escaped, but the two in the rear, lagging behind the rest, were caught and captured.



Pié de Pálo returned in triumph, bringing two prizes with him.

In 1568 La Rochelle, on the Bay of Biscay, was the centre of French buccaneering. The Prince of Condé had established his headquarters in this Huguenot seaport, and collected around him Protestant adventurers of every nationality. Under the disguise of his flag, the pirate squadrons sailed the ocean, and flung themselves into Spanish ports. Fifty corsair ships ravaged the Atlantic coasts, cruised for the gold fleet, captured richly laden merchantmen, and tossed their crews into the sea. Every year, three hundred thousand ducats' worth of booty was stuffed into the holds of the French marauders, and as the English rovers had held the Channel from Penzance to Dover, so now the French free-lances were masters of the sea from Ushant to Finisterre.

## CHAPTER XIV

### BUCCANEERING IN THE CARIBBEAN SEA

[THERE was nothing niggardly or exclusive, nothing sectional or provincial, about the Caribbean Sea, whatever may be said of the Spaniards who at one time seemed to look upon it as a private lake of their own. They closed the entrance doors and hung up warning notices, "No admittance," "Dangerous passing," hoping in this way to discourage tramps and trespassers. But Europe believed in open doors then, as she does now, and she was determined to force the bars. Besides, the spirit of the waters could not be thwarted: it was free, tolerant, hospitable, and its reputation for lavishness and wealth spread abroad. Its gifts of jewels, slaves, and "pieces of eight" were open to all who would come and take. Sea-tramps of almost every land and nation began to cross the Atlantic and force the closed doors of the treasure-house of the West Indies, and in spite of the Spaniards the Caribbean Sea became a cosmopolitan centre.]

[Among the first to come were the cattle drivers and wood-cutters, the hunters and traders, who

were attracted by the independent, wild, and lawless life. They gathered in large colonies, according to their nationality, and settled on many of the islands,—on Jamaica, Hayti, and Tortuga,—where they carried on the double trade of hunting wild oxen, boars, and swine through the tangled and matted forests, and of hunting jewels and pieces of eight on the smooth waters of the sea. These were the real buccaneers, these half traders, half corsairs, who combined work and plunder, and divided the year between chasing animals and chasing ships. [Their name, “buccaneer,” which came from the peculiar process they used in smoking and drying beef and pork, called the *boucan* process, they in turn handed down to all those who adopted the other half of their trade, — piracy. It seems strange that a word which has come to mean sea-robbery on a large scale, and has been applied to corsairs of every nation, should have originated among landlubbers and the beef-drying trade. These colonies of hunters became the centres and headquarters of all the sea-rovers who every year flocked in larger numbers to the treasure-house of the West.]

[It was a long procession of adventurers that came stealing across the Atlantic to the forbidden sea. One could see their white sails flapping in the wind as they scudded over the ocean, like a great clothes-line stretched from Europe to America. And what a mixed procession it was! Eng-

lish, French, Dutch, Portuguese — Protestants and Huguenots mostly — beggars and nobles, boys and men, dashing coxcombs and rough, uneducated boors. There were business speculators who wanted to make a rich deal in the market and win a fortune at one bold stroke. There were rovers and free-lances who loved a life of freedom and unrestraint. There were religious discontents who fled from persecution. There were younger sons who could not earn a living at home and came to amass riches.

Those who were in debt, or unfortunate, or suspected, or unscrupulous, and those who only craved excitement and adventure, flocked to the El Dorado of the New World. And, above all, men who hated Spain, who loathed the Inquisition, and execrated the memory of Philip II, came for their revenge, to rifle Spanish ships, injure Spanish trade, slaughter Spanish men.]

[In those early days West Indian buccaneering was something more than petty piracy. It was an organized system, in which race fought against race, and religion against religion. It was Spain on one side, and those whom she had oppressed and persecuted on the other.] This was the common bond that united together all the roving miscellany that gathered among the Antilles.

[The buccaneers took their profession very seriously and went about it in a solemn and systematic manner. They formed themselves into temporary

republics, elected their own leader, and at a general council laid down certain rules and regulations which were subscribed to under oath, and became the law of the cruise. When a looting expedition had been decided on, notices were sent out to all the pirates on the island, appointing a day and place of meeting. Each one was to come provided with a sufficient stock of powder and bullets for the expedition. At the general council the Articles were put down in writing, and everything to the minutest detail was carefully provided for.]

Σ “No prey, no pay” : that was the pirate law. But in case of prey, the plunder was all put into the common stock, and out of this the salaries and dividends were paid. First in order of payment came the salaries of the captain, surgeon, and carpenter ; and these varied from \$200 to \$300 for a cruise. Then the maimed or wounded were given awards for the loss of eye or limb. The different members and extremities had different valuations and brought different prices. A right arm was supposed to be worth \$750 ; while a left arm was valued at \$625. The legs were on a somewhat lower scale of worth, and the compensation for the loss of an eye was only \$100, the same as for a finger.

After these special appropriations had been made, about \$250 were drawn from the common stock for the provisions, and the remainder was

divided into equal shares and distributed among all the pirates, even including the officers who had already received their salaries. To the captain were allotted five portions, the master's mate two, and the other officers in proportion. The seamen had one share each, and the boys half a share.]

[When all these details had been set down in writing at the general council, each man took a solemn oath that he would neither steal nor conceal any of the plunder for his private use, and if afterward he was found to be unfaithful he was turned out of the society. The next care was to determine where to forage for provisions, what Spanish hog-yard or tortoise fisheries to rob, for these were the two favorite articles of food among the pirates. And after these preliminaries were settled, the meeting decided upon the goal of the expedition, to what place they should go "to seek their desperate fortunes."]

[In the early days the ships of the buccaneers were small, and the companies numbered only twenty or thirty men. Sometimes they would start out in two or three canoes and lie in wait for merchant vessels on the usual thoroughfares of trade. When one of their victims came in sight, they would steal close alongside, pick off the chief officers and men, send a shower of musketry over the deck, and then board with a rush before the enemy had time to recover himself. Their skill, discipline, and strong feeling of fellowship which

bound them to one another like brothers, their strength, agility, and remarkable endurance, always gave them the superiority over an enemy three and four times their size.]

[The pirates were not, at first, harsh or cruel to their prisoners. The officers of the captured ships were put under ransom, and the common seamen were usually set ashore on the nearest island. It was only later that to the thirst for gold was added the thirst for blood. On the whole the early buccaneers were a rough but not inhuman set of ruffians, with a rude sense of honor, justice, and devotion among themselves, but with very little conscience about the property of others. It is true, however, that they looked upon the riches they plundered as having been already robbed by the Spaniards, whom they counted as more wholesale and stupendous thieves than themselves.]

## CHAPTER XV

### A WISE AND A FOOLISH PIRATE

ONE of the first pirates to become distinguished among the French freebooters on the island of Tortuga was Peter the Great. It is not often that a man can win a kingly nickname and the fame of a lifetime by a single act. But Peter succeeded in doing this. He leaped into sudden prominence by a brilliant stroke, amassed a fortune, acquired an envied reputation, set a shining example, and then had the wisdom to retire from business. In this way he always remained "great" and preserved a certain halo of romance, besides making sure of his riches. If all speculators would show an equal amount of sagacity, they would be lucky.

Peter the Great was born at the seafaring town of Dieppe in Normandy, the very centre of that coast noted for its wild rovers and robbers. It is not unlikely that he came of pirate stock from the ease with which he turned adventurer, and sailed across to the sea where gold and freedom could be had by every comer if he were fortunate. At first Peter was not very successful ; he was just able to make a living, and even suffered from hunger now



and then. He found that his chosen profession was rather uncertain and had its ups and downs; as in most pursuits, it was something of a struggle to get well established. But he had a natural gift of command and soon rose to the position of leader among his companions.

His opportunity came in the most unexpected manner, and he was quick and daring enough to seize it. He had been cruising with his little band of followers for a long time without finding any prey. All together there were twenty-nine men, huddled together in a small boat, out on the empty sea. Not a sail had been seen for days, their provisions had given out, they saw no fate in store for them but starvation unless they could reach one of their haunts before their strength failed them. But this seemed impossible, and they were filled with despair.

Suddenly a great ship loomed up in the distance. She was no less than the vice-admiral of the Spanish fleet, and her huge bulk swept slowly and majestically over the water. Although she had become separated from the rest of the fleet, her captain felt no alarm, for Spanish vessels had passed and repassed unmolested through the Bahama Channel. A harmless-looking boat with some two dozen men in it had been seen cruising aimlessly about, and the captain had been warned that these were pirates. But he treated the idea with fine scorn. And even if they were, what

of it? Should he be afraid of such a cockle-shell?

Meanwhile on the innocent-looking craft there had been suppressed excitement and fierce resolves. Better to die by the sword than by starvation! The extremity of their fortunes had driven them to a devil-may-care point of recklessness. They were ready for a desperate game, and they would take the ship or be killed to a man. These meditations had brought them under the lee of the great Spanish vessel, and her sides frowned menacingly upon them. When they were so close under her that retreat was more dangerous than attack, they realized that it would be easier "to extract sunbeams from cucumbers" than to subdue this giant.

The freebooters faced the crisis with grim and solemn fortitude. They swore an oath to their captain, Peter the Great, that they would bear themselves without "fear or fainting" in the coming struggle. They then ordered the surgeon of the boat to bore holes in her sides so that she would gradually sink under them and they would thus be forced into a life-and-death struggle. Truly they sank their ship behind them.

It was now the dusk of the evening. Only vague shapes could be seen moving here and there in the shadow. Pistol in one hand and sword in the other, the pirates climbed stealthily up the sides of the ship like so many wildcats.

Without a word or a sound Peter and his men dashed down to the cabin. It was all done with so much swiftness and stealth that no alarm was raised, no warning given. The surprise was complete.

The Spanish captain was playing cards in the cabin with several of his younger officers. He looked up to see a crowd of ruffians rush in and the leader of the gang hold a pistol at his breast, demanding that he should deliver up the ship. In his amazement he cried, "Are these devils, or what are they?" While Peter was parleying with the Spanish captain in this cavalier manner, one half of his crew had taken possession of the gun-room, seized the arms and stores, and killed all those who made resistance. The remainder of the ship's company thought it wiser to surrender than to follow the fate of their dead comrades.

This was how Peter the Great captured the Spanish vice-admiral. Having made himself master of his magnificent prize, he retained as many seamen as he had need of to man the ship, and with lordly clemency set the rest on shore as free men. This done, he hoisted sail for France, and carried with him all the riches that filled the hold of his gorgeous new vessel.

✓ Peter departed from his haunts in a blaze of glory. Never again was he seen in those parts, but the renown of his exploit remained behind to dazzle the eyes and turn the heads of every planter

and hunter on the island of Tortuga. Although Peter was a worldly wise pirate and was loaded with no heavy list of crimes to distress his conscience, it must be said that he had a most unfortunate moral influence on those whom he left behind.

Men of honest, humble, and peaceful avocations abandoned their work and took to piracy. There was a mad scramble for boats. Any kind of a craft would serve provided it could float. The demand was greater than the supply. And as Tortuga offered no field for either the purchase or the building of vessels, men took to their canoes and went in search of them elsewhere.

The new fad grew with such alacrity that in two years' time there were as many as twenty pirate ships of Tortuga alone that went cruising among the islands, capturing Spanish ships laden with plate, vessels carrying hides and tobacco, and coasters freighted with every species of commodity. These looted treasures were then sold to vessels stopping at the port of Tortuga, and the island soon became a regular mart for pirated goods.

Peter the pioneer was followed by a long list of pirates more or less talented, and among them was the French freebooter Peter Francis, who was a pearl specialist. He was the equal of the first Peter in daring, but not his equal in success.

It seemed to be no uncommon thing for the

pirates to be straitened in their circumstances every now and then, and reduced not only to their last penny, but to their last morsel of food. Chance often chose to be a hard taskmaster. Such was the state of affairs with Peter Francis and his boon companions when we first hear of them. They were twenty-seven men in a boat — twenty-seven empty men, in an empty boat, on an empty sea. But so far from being daunted by the prospect, it seemed only to stimulate and whet their spirit.

After vainly cruising among the islands off the South American coast, watching intently for those heavily laden Spanish ships that were due to come from Maracaibo, but whose sails could nowhere be espied, they hatched a bolder scheme. Desperation lent them audacity. Gathering together in sombre council, they listened with sparkling eyes to the daring proposition of their chief. Peter Francis laid before them no less an adventure than to attack the pearl fleet then riding at anchor at the mouth of the La Hacha River. A famous bank of pearls lay along the coast not far from Cartagena, and the fisheries yielded every year a rich return, the dexterous and agile negroes diving sometimes to a depth of six fathoms under water to hunt the precious gems.

The fleet of a dozen pearl vessels, protected by a Spanish man-of-war and a vice-admiral, was even at that moment preparing to weigh anchor. The risks of attacking it would be heavy, but the gain

would be fabulous. The pirates unanimously decided to try their luck. It so happened that the man-of-war was riding half a league from the rest of the fleet, and this at least was in their favor.

When the pirates sighted the pearl fleet, they lowered their sail and took to their oars, rowing in a leisurely fashion along the coast. The wind had dropped, and the sea was calm and peaceful. The strange rowboat, which pretended to be a passing Spanish craft bound to Maracaibo, excited no suspicion. It was making its way along the pearl bank, and was about to pass astern of the vice-admiral, when the placid rowers suddenly threw away their oars, seized their swords and pistols, and leaped up the sides of the vessel.

The Spanish ship was mounted with eight guns and manned by a crew of sixty men, who put up a good fight, although they were caught by surprise. There was a short, vigorous struggle, but the fierce and impetuous assault of Peter and his men bore down the Spaniards, and in a few moments the deck was cleared and the crew made prisoners. Then with promises and menaces he forced his captives to obey his orders and navigate the ship.

Peter issued his commands with quick decision, and, under the persuasion of the pistol's muzzle, the Spanish crew did his bidding with alacrity. His own pirate boat was sunk, the Spanish flag was run up at the masthead, anchors were weighed,

sails hoisted, and the ship got under way. With a little clever stratagem Peter Francis hoped to beguile and overpower the formidable man-of-war that rode at anchor at the mouth of the river, and thus become master of the entire fleet.

But, unfortunately for Peter, the Spanish captain was unusually vigilant. Seeing that one of his fleet was under sail, and fearing lest his sailors should have some treacherous design of making off with the vessel and the booty, he too got under way. This manœuvre disturbed Peter's plan, and he hurriedly changed his tactics. He had no intention of measuring himself face to face in open conflict with a heavy man-of-war. So he pressed on all sail and headed for the open seas, hoping that he could slip out of the river and away.

The man-of-war followed in pursuit, and the chase promised to be a lively one. The two ships scudded through the water under a crowd of canvas, ropes groaning, masts straining. Peter had a fair start and the chances were in his favor. All would have been well had it not been for a malicious gust of wind and injudicious seamanship. The masts were taxed to their utmost ; no allowance was made for a sudden shift of breeze. And the wilful wind chose that moment to blow with redoubled energy. A rending crack, a crushing and splintering of wood, and the main-mast fell crashing into the water.

There was no escape now for the pirates. The

man-of-war swept alongside and poured in her shot and missiles. But, even with these tremendous odds against them, Peter and his men made a stubborn resistance. Although they knew that in the end they would be forced to surrender, they meant not to do it tamely, and went so far as to hold out for conditions. Finally, with the stipulation that they should not be sold into slavery, but be put ashore free to go where they pleased, they consented to give up the ship.

It was hard to lose that superb cargo of pearls, which was worth more than a hundred thousand pieces of eight, besides the vessel with its provisions, arms, and stores. But these were the chances of piracy. If it had not been for that broken mainmast, Peter Francis would have been almost second in fame to Peter the Great.



## CHAPTER XVI

### A CHAPTER OF CHANCES

[THE island of Jamaica was a favorite and convenient base of operations for pirates of many nationalities. It lay halfway between the Channel of Yucatan and the Windward Isles, on the direct route of trade between Cuba and South America. English, Dutch, and Portuguese gathered in its creeks and inlets, sallied out on their marauding jaunts, and returned to refit and sell their plunder.]

Here Bartholomew Portugues set up his headquarters and mustered around him a band of thirty followers. Although captain of a small crew he seems to have been better off than some, for his boat was mounted with four guns. In this modest craft he was cruising off a headland on the island of Cuba, when he sighted a large galleon bearing down with superb magnificence. Her sails were spread to the wind, her twenty great guns gazed out grimly over the water, her seventy seamen were busy hauling ropes and bustling about on deck. For the ship was fairly on her way and fast nearing her home port. She

was bound from Cartagena to Havana, and that meant a rich and precious cargo in her hold.

She was sailing along the southern coast of Cuba when a small and rather despicable-looking boat had the insolence to attack her. But what could such a pygmy do against a giant? The galleon beat off the stupid craft as one would a yelping, blundering cur. But Bartholomew — for it was he — would not allow himself to be so easily disposed of. He hauled off to escape serious damage to his boat, and then started on a series of vexing, swift, dexterous assaults, which kept the Spaniards in a state of constant irritation and nervousness. By the agility of his movements he managed to elude the galleon's guns, and with every darting, dashing attack he picked off man after man until more than twenty had fallen.

With a final rush he boarded the ship, cleared the decks after a hard struggle, and found himself master of a rich prize. In the hold was stored a cargo of seventy thousand pieces of eight, a hundred and twenty thousand weight of cocoanuts, and other plunder. With this precious booty, Bartholomew spread sail for the Cape of St. Anthony, on the western point of Cuba, where he proposed to repair and refit while waiting for a favorable wind to carry him back to Jamaica.

But he had reckoned without the chances of the sea and of fortune, two fickle godmothers. Shel-

ter had nearly been reached, the cape was almost in sight, and their booty in their grasp, when the pirates ran into a hornets' nest. Three great ships loomed unexpectedly upon them. They were on their way from New Spain to Havana. At a glance Bartholomew knew that he was doomed; the wind was dead foul, he could not fly, and there was no chance in a stand-up fight of one against three. So he made the best of his fate and surrendered to superior numbers.

The wheel had reversed, and the melancholy freebooters found themselves stripped of all their plundered riches and thrown into chains. But, as in stock gambling, no one knows when the next rise will come. It so happened that before the ships had reached port, when they were making their way through the Channel of Yucatan, a sudden and fierce storm burst over them. The gale scattered the ships, and they each beat for shelter as best they could. The vessel on which the pirates were prisoners ran along the coast of Yucatan and put into the river harbor of Campeche.

The whole town turned out to see the incoming ship, and the chief merchants of the place came down to welcome the Spanish captain. The arrival of vessels was an event of the greatest interest; they brought news from the outside world, they were the floating newspapers, the purveyors of gossip and current happenings. And to-day the

Spanish ship had a thrilling story to tell : pirates assaulted, captured, chained, the famous Bartholomew Portugues a prisoner !

The news spread over Campeche and roused the people into a fever of fury. Well was Bartholomew remembered on that coast ; his record and his deeds were still fresh in the minds of men and women whose homes he had plundered and burned, whose brothers and sons he had murdered. He was in their hands now, at the mercy of their vengeance.

The pirates were taken into custody and carried ashore, there to be dealt with. But for Bartholomew a special fate had been reserved, and he was left on board ship under a strong guard. He had escaped once before from the people of Campeche, and they were careful that he should not slip through their fingers again. Meanwhile they set up a gibbet on the shore within sight of the ship, and on it Bartholomew was to be hung the next day.

The news of his own speedy execution did not fail to reach the ears of the solitary pirate. He knew that if he were to escape at all it must be done that night, but the trouble was that he had never learned to swim. However, he did not despair, and relied on his ingenuity to shape a way out of the difficulty. He found two large earthen jars such as are used by the Spaniards for transporting wine, and these he stopped very

tight so that no water could leak in. Then he sat down and waited for the night.

As soon as darkness fell and all on board were asleep, he crept over to the corner where the sentry that guarded him lay at full length on the floor, and plunged a knife up to the hilt into his heart. The man died without a groan. Then Bartholomew threw the earthen jars into the water and leaped headlong after them through the port. Hanging on to his improvised life-preserver he managed to half drift and half swim, or beat the water with his legs, and succeeded in reaching the shore before daylight without being detected. As soon as he set foot on land he took to the woods and lay in hiding for three days with no food but wild herbs.

When the Spaniards discovered the next morning that their prisoner had escaped, they were filled with rage and disappointment. Several search parties were sent out and they beat the woods for miles around; but Bartholomew, from his hiding-place in the hollow of a tree, laughed at them in his sleeve. At the end of the third day the pursuit seemed to have been given up, and Bartholomew thought it safe to sally out of his retreat.

Keeping within sight of the shore, he tramped eastward day after day. A small calabash filled with water was his only store of provisions, and when he was hungry he would hunt for the few

shell-fish that were sometimes hidden among the rocks of the shore. He was often hungry and exhausted, but still he plodded on. After several days he reached a broad river. Here was a new difficulty, for he could not swim, and there was nothing in the woods of which to make a buoy. But his quick eye caught sight of an old piece of board which had been washed up by the waves, and in which were fastened a few large nails.

This was a treasure to Bartholomew. Patiently and with much labor he whetted the nails on a stone, until they were sharp enough to hack with. Then he cut down some small branches of trees, tied them together with twigs, and built himself a raft. No river now could stop him ; he carried his raft on his back, and whenever he came to a stream he paddled across, with a branch for an oar. Two weeks from the day of his escape he reached the Cape of Golfo Triste.

There he found a pirate vessel belonging to some of his friends and comrades, and we can picture to ourselves the pride and relish with which he related his adventures and strange experiences, and the eager interest with which his listeners gathered around him and drank in his tale of alternate triumph and misfortune. He became a hero in their eyes, and they were ready to do anything for him.

One would suppose that after all these vicissitudes Bartholomew would not have cared even to

see those Spanish ships again, but this was not his way of thinking. He asked his friends to provide him with a boat and twenty men, and with this small force he promised to return to Campeche and capture the vessel from which he had made his escape. Stealing back along the coast, he slipped unnoticed into the river, took the Spaniards by surprise, and carried the ship by assault. Then he weighed anchor, hoisted sail, and glided jubilantly out to sea before the town was aroused.

It was with triumph and self-satisfaction that Bartholomew headed for Jamaica. After his many adversities he had wrung success out of fate; he was rich and powerful, master of a ship and a valuable booty. But he allowed himself to rejoice too soon. Hardly had he reached the Isle of Pines, on the south side of Cuba, when a fearful tropical storm broke loose with relentless intensity. The fierce gale of wind picked up his vessel as if it had been a cockle-shell, and dashed it viciously against the dangerous rocks of the Jardines. The side of the vessel stove in against the sharp reef, and was crushed into a mangled wreck. The pirates escaped in a canoe and, after many days of hard rowing and harder privations, they arrived at Jamaica poorer than when they had left.

No less exciting were the adventures of another frequenter of the Jamaican lairs, whose favorite pirating ground was along the unfortunate shores

of Campeche. He was a Dutchman, of a fierce, implacable, and cruel nature, whose national and fiery hatred of Spain was his evil passion, and drove him into pitiless and horrible acts of vengeance. He was born in the Netherlands, but lived for many years in Brazil while it was in the possession of the Dutch West India Company. When the Portuguese conquered the country, our Dutchman, with many others, was obliged to flee, and, seeing no other opening for him, he took refuge on the Island of Jamaica, and joined the Society of Pirates. Not choosing to be known by his own name, his fellow-freebooters called him Roc the Brazilian.

[Roc soon won the esteem and admiration of his comrades, and his ability marked him as a future commander. At first all was peace and harmony among the thieves; the pirates of Jamaica were no exception to the rule that thieves treat each other well. They were liberal and open-handed; if a comrade had been unfortunate and lost his goods, his friends shared their stores with him. But occasionally there were quarrels, and it so happened that in Roc's company some of the men had an altercation with their captain, and seceded. They set up a company of their own, and appointed Roc as captain.]

The first act of the new pirate-commander was the brilliant capture of a large Spanish ship laden with plate, and this exploit brought him instant



renown. But his fame was of a lurid, dismal kind that filled people with not unreasoning fear. For Roc was of a vicious character, and amused himself with many diabolic pastimes. He was especially fond of getting drunk, and then parading up and down the streets with a club, beating and wounding any chance passers-by. He was more successful than any squad of police would have been in clearing the streets, for every one turned and fled at his approach.

But Roc had already tired of these land diversions by the time he had run through his money, and was ready to start out anew in search of prey. On one of these expeditions he ran into a violent tempest, such as often sweep across the Caribbean Sea, and his boat was wrecked off the coast near Campeche. The whole band of pirates managed to save themselves in a canoe, with nothing but their muskets and a small store of powder and shot. Their one hope was to reach Golfo Triste, which lay several days' march beyond them, and was a well-known refitting and meeting place for the filibusters.

The little band of thirty pirates started out hopefully on their journey, with hunger and thirst for their companions; but these were not their only enemies. They had not gone far along the coast when they heard the dull thud of horses' hoofs, and knew they were being pursued. Nearer and nearer, louder and louder, grew the

thundering, and then a troop of a hundred Spanish horsemen swept into sight. Roc turned to his men : "Let us die fighting like brave men," he cried, "rather than surrender to the Spaniards and be tortured."

Fired with desperate courage, they faced the Spanish troop and received them with a murderous volley of artillery. Every shot did its work, and twenty horsemen fell on the first onslaught. Then the *mêlée* became general, and, after an hour's hard fighting, those that remained of the Spanish horsemen were put to flight. The pirates took possession of everything they could find, mounted the riderless horses, and pressed on toward Golfo Triste. But they were not destined to reach the pirate station, for on the way they espied a flotilla of canoes lading wood under convoy of a small war-ship that rode at anchor close by.

It was no great feat for the sturdy buccaneers to capture this entire fleet and to appropriate the provisions and stores which they found on board. The food supply, however, seems to have been scant, for they were obliged to kill their horses and salt the flesh. Still, they managed to live on corned horse-meat for many days, and found it better than wild herbs. On their return voyage they ran in with and seized a Spanish ship carrying a cargo of merchandise and money. With this array of prizes Roc and his men swept into

Jamaica and, it is said, wasted in a few days all they had gained.

The Brazilian's next cruise was not so fortunate. He had grown overbold and reckless; success had turned his head and made him think that he was invincible. He had made sail for his usual marauding ground on the shores of Yucatan, and was lying off the harbor of Campeche, when he was seized with the rash desire to reconnoitre the port in a small boat and spy out the prospect of plunder. But he had ventured once too often into the very jaws of the enemy.

Roc and his few followers were captured, carried prisoners to the town, and, by order of the governor, thrown into a foul dungeon. The next day they were to be hung in the market-place. In this fatal dilemma the pirate's cunning came to Roc's aid. He wrote a letter that feigned to come from a body of pirates in the offing, and managed to smuggle it out of the prison and into the hands of the governor. In it the supposed pirates threatened that never for all time would they give quarter to any Spaniard who should fall into their hands, if Roc and his comrades came to any harm.

This menace had its effect upon the governor. What might not these cruel and dreaded buccaneers do if roused to fury? Their ravages had already spread terror along the entire coast. What new and terrible depredations might they

not be capable of to avenge the death of their comrades? These thoughts made the governor very uneasy, and after a sleepless and anxious night he decided to release his prisoners and deport them to Spain. Forcing them to take an oath that they would abandon piracy forever, he shipped them in a Spanish galleon as common sailors, and hoped to be rid of his troublesome captives.

It is not to be expected that pirates would keep their oaths, and as soon as Roc and his men set foot on the coast of Spain they promptly took passage in a return boat and set sail again for the West Indies.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE STORY OF A WICKED BUCCANEER

THE rapid spread of piracy was alarming the peaceful colonists of the West Indies, and the buccaneers themselves, elated by their successes, were growing every year more arrogant. Unfortunately the only remedy that suggested itself to the not over-fertile mind of the Spaniards resulted only in killing the small concerns and giving birth to the trusts. The business from being retail became wholesale, and the field of operations, instead of being confined to a limited area, stretched over vast tracts of land and sea.

As the Spaniards could not conquer or subdue the pirates, they conceived the idea of starving them out, a scheme that afterward succeeded with the Chinese because they carried it out in a systematic and sweeping way. But with the Spaniards it was only a weak makeshift and failed lamentably. They hoped that if the buccaneers could find no prey they would either die of hunger or renounce their wicked ways. An order therefore went forth to restrict all commerce in the Caribbean Sea. Fewer ships were to be sent out;

the trading coasters that plied between the islands were to barter only the necessities of life; and as for the larger vessels that carried to Spain the treasures of the West, they were to be reduced to the smallest possible number. As trade could not be protected, stop all trade. It was a primitive way of cutting the Gordian Knot, and merely caused worse trouble, because, we are told, "the pirates, finding not so many ships at sea as before, began to gather into greater companies, and land upon the Spanish dominions, ruining whole cities, towns, and villages."

The Caribbean Sea no longer satisfied them. They spread up the Atlantic coast, and crossed over to the South Sea. They mounted the rivers and penetrated into the heart of the land. They sacked and captured towns, laid cities under ransom, and extorted blackmail. Their captains had become admirals, their boats had turned into fleets, their companies into armies, and their skirmishes for plunder had taken the shape of devastating wars. 1

One of the first of these noted piratical leaders was a Frenchman known far and wide over the West Indies as Francis L'Ollonois. He was born in France at the Sables d'Ollone and had been transported while still a boy to the Caribbean Sea, and there sold into slavery. From the scarcity of slaves in the West Indies and the need of the planters for servants and laborers there had started

a regular traffic in young men and boys. Both in England and France dealers in slaves went about either kidnapping or beguiling youths and transporting them to the islands. There they were sold for a period of three or seven years. As these young white slaves were not the permanent property of their owners they were maltreated and mercilessly beaten, subjected to every kind of exposure and neglect, and forced to do the severest and most menial labor. It was only the strong, the rough, and the low born who outlived this treatment. {L'Ollonois was one of these *indentured* *servants*

When he had served his time and gained his freedom he went to the island of Hispaniola and turned hunter. Dressed in blood-stained skins, with musket and knife he went in pursuit of the wild oxen and swine, and for a time supported himself by smoking and salting the meat. His next venture was to go to sea as a common sailor, and in this capacity he showed so much knowledge, skill, and daring that he rose high in the favor of his employers. Monsieur de la Place, the governor of Tortuga, heard of his ability, presented him with a ship, and gave him his start in life as a fortune-hunter. The planters and hunters of Tortuga were themselves half buccaneers, and the island owed so much of its prosperity and wealth to piracy that even the governors aided and abetted the commerce in stolen goods and had a hand in more than one plundering venture. 7

L'Ollonois' ruling passion was a bitter and merciless hatred of Spain. This, combined with a ferocious, cruel, and perfidious nature capable of the lowest baseness and the most savage brutality, soon made his name a terror to every Spaniard. Rather than fall into his hands they would choose to die fighting or sink with their ships. They returned hate for hate, and no fate seemed too inhuman to reserve for the infamous buccaneer.

Almost at the beginning of L'Ollonois' career as a pirate he met with his first misfortune. A severe storm wrecked his ship off the coast of Campeche, and left him and his followers stranded on the enemy's ground. The buccaneers saved themselves from drowning by swimming ashore, but hardly had they set foot on dry land than they ran into worse danger. A large body of Spaniards fell upon them in a furious attack and either killed or wounded almost the entire company of freebooters.

L'Ollonois was only slightly wounded, and greatly feared that he might be discovered by the Spaniards and fall alive into their power. They would, he knew, subject him to the most horrible tortures, and death of any kind would be better. So, as he lay upon the ground, he took several handfuls of sand, mixed it with the blood from his own wounds, and with this lurid compound he besmeared his face and hands to



give them a ghastly look. Then he dragged himself among his dead comrades, and lay there like one of them until every vestige of a Spaniard had disappeared from the field.

For the next few days L'Ollonois lay in hiding among the woods. He had managed to dress and bind his own wounds, and before long they were sufficiently healed for him to walk. Disguising himself in the clothes of one of the dead Spaniards, he made his way to the town of Campeche and went about fearlessly among a people who would have butchered him alive had they recognized him. But all thought him dead, and he found the town busy in rejoicing over the news. Bonfires were built and masses sung for their happy deliverance from his cruelties and depredations. It must have whetted his appetite for future revenge to see and hear these joyful funeral services that were speeding his guilty soul into the next world.

L'Ollonois did not linger long in a town where he could scarcely help feeling like his own ghost. He bribed some slaves with promises of liberty, induced them to steal a canoe from one of their masters, and escaped with them to sea. As soon as he reached Tortuga he got possession of another ship, by his usual crafty methods, and started out again with twenty men in search of fresh booty.

On this expedition he chose for attack a small village on the south coast of Cuba where the

inhabitants drove a thriving trade in tobacco, sugar, and hides. The shallowness of the water along the shore obliged the traders to carry on their traffic in small boats, and L'Ollonois thus counted on an easy victory. But some fisherman had seen him and given warning of his coming. A messenger was sent post-haste to Havana asking assistance from the governor to help capture the pirate. The chief executive of Cuba could with difficulty be made to believe that the dead buccaneer was still carrying on his favorite pursuit of killing men and stealing money. Had he come from another world to torment them? For had he not been killed once already on the shores of Campeche? And none but the devil can die more than once. Had L'Ollonois indeed ended his career on that battle-field, he would have escaped a more fearful fate, and the world would have had one villain the less to record.

At last the bewildered governor was persuaded into sending an armed ship to the relief of the traders. A vessel mounted with ten guns and defended by ninety men ought certainly to annihilate a dead pirate and his crew. There was also a hangman on board, for the governor's orders were explicit: they were immediately to hang every one of the pirates excepting their dead chief, whom, paradoxical as it may seem, they were to bring alive to Havana.

News of the coming of the armed ship had

reached L'Ollonois, and, with the cunning of a daredevil, instead of taking to flight, he went to meet her. She was riding at anchor at the mouth of the river Estera. It was night, and the pirates slipped close up to the vessel in their two canoes before they were discovered. The Spaniards took them for fishermen and hailed to know if they had seen any pirates abroad. No, they had seen nothing of pirates or of anything else. So the captain of the vessel concluded that L'Ollonois had taken to his heels, and was lulled into security. But just before daybreak the watch was surprised by a fierce gang of thieves, headed by the dreaded buccaneer, who scrambled up both sides of the ship and fell upon the Spaniards with sword and cutlass. The unfortunate crew, roused suddenly from their sleep, seized their weapons and made a good show of resistance. But they were beaten down under the hatches, and L'Ollonois was master of the ship.

The tables were turned. The victor sat with grinning triumph on deck, and one by one ordered the Spanish crew to be brought up. As each man reached the deck his head was struck off. Last came the negro hangman, who implored piteously for mercy, promising to tell all he knew if his life were spared. From him the pirate extorted all the information he cared for and then despatched him to join his companions. Having completed this bloody function, he sent an insolent message

to the governor of Havana, notifying him that never thenceforward would he give quarter to any Spaniard whatsoever, adding, "Thus I have retaliated the kindness you designed to me and my companions."

L'Ollonois now set sail for Tortuga, picked up a prize of plate and merchandise on the way, and entered the home port with flying colors. The successful buccaneer was received with joy and congratulations. But he had not returned to be fêted. He at once called a mass-meeting of all the pirates on the Island of Tortuga and set before them the vast plan he had hatched to equip a fleet, invade the Spanish dominions, and capture the city of Maracaibo. His proposition met with unanimous and enthusiastic favor. Not a buccaneer but wanted to set sail on that expedition. Even the distinguished and wealthy De Basco, who after amassing a fortune had retired from business and was living in ease and comfort, asked to join the fleet as leader of the land forces.

There was great excitement and bustle at the pirate port. Ships were fitted out and provisioned for a long voyage; arms were collected, and six hundred and sixty men enlisted in the enterprise. It was with quite a smart and warlike air that the little fleet of eight vessels set sail in early spring, led by Admiral L'Ollonois in his ten-gun ship. Their first run was to the north shore of the Island of Hispaniola, where they were joined by



Last came the negro hangman, who implored piteously for mercy



a company of French hunters, and took on a fresh store of provisions. Setting sail again they skirted eastward along the island and ran into a ship from Porto Rico laden with cacao-nuts.

Admiral L'Ollonois reserved for himself the pleasure of attacking the Spaniard single-handed, and ordered the rest of his fleet to await him at Cape Punta d'Espada. It was not without a struggle, however, and a good three hours' fight that his antagonist was captured, for the Spanish ship was mounted with sixteen guns and had fifty fighting men on board. She proved a valuable prize, for there were no less than forty thousand pieces of eight, and jewels worth another ten thousand in her hold. L'Ollonois commanded her to be taken to Tortuga, unladed, and brought back to reënforce his fleet.

Meanwhile his colleagues had not been idle. They had run down and seized another Spanish eight-gun ship laden with military stores and money, and had thus possessed themselves of a quantity of powder, muskets, and the ubiquitous pieces of eight. This was a promising beginning, and L'Ollonois found himself strengthened by recruits of men and vessels. Transferring his black flag to the Spanish sixteen-gun ship, he gave the signal to weigh, and spread out toward the coast of Venezuela.

Now is the time to look at the map! We can see the pirate fleet as it sweeps southward toward

South America, how it approaches that upper northwest corner, shortens sail in the offing, and casts anchor outside the entrance of the Gulf of Venezuela. Then with the map we can picture to ourselves clearly the arrangement of islands and watch-towers and sandbanks which our authority and eye-witness, the great literary pirate Exquemeling, describes with such care.

On both sides of the gulf are two small islands ; one of these is called Watch Isle, "because in the middle thereof is to be seen a high hill, upon which stands a house, wherein dwells perpetually a watchman." Opposite lies the Isle of Pigeons, topped by a castle whose guns command the only channel for ships. This channel is no broader "than the flight of a great gun of eight-pound carriage," and is edged by dangerous sandbanks. Between these two islands there disgorges a small fresh-water lake, which is riddled with treacherous sandbanks, such as the Great Table, and whose waters flow into the ample gulf of Venezuela.

On the west shore of the lake lies the town of Maracaibo, built in straggling fashion along the water's edge. Back of it stretch out rich plantations of tobacco and cattle ranches that reach as far as the large city of Gibraltar, the fruit garden of the region. Each side of the lake is inhabited by a weird, aerial settlement of human orchids, or air men. On the west is a wild and savage tribe of Indians, on the east are whole villages of



peaceful fishermen. All these, braves and fisher-folk alike, dwell in small huts built upon the tops of the trees that grow in the lake. These hanging villages, with their huts standing on stilts, form a safe retreat from the millions of mosquitoes and gnats that hang over the water, and from the frequent inundations of the twenty-five rivers that feed the lake.

Few towns could have been better protected by natural defences, yet L'Ollonois sailed in with no more trouble than if he had been on a pleasure trip. Bringing his whole fleet inside the spacious port, he cast anchor near the mouth of the lake, landed a strong party of men, and attacked the earthwork that commanded the bar. He cut off and defeated a Spanish ambuscade, and then assaulted the fortress. After a three hours' hand-to-hand, sword-and-pistol fight, the defences were carried, and almost every vestige of the fort destroyed.

This done, L'Ollonois signalled for his fleet to attack the town. The advance was made with caution; canoes full of men were sent forward to land under cover of a brisk fire from the ships. To their surprise there came no answer from the shore. Marching in good order the buccaneers entered the town. Not a living person was to be seen; houses and streets were deserted; the people had fled in a body. Men, women, and children had escaped to the woods, or retreated

in their boats to Gibraltar, carrying with them their money and valuables. But they left behind them a well-provisioned town, full of flour, bread, pork, poultry, brandy, and wines. It was a long time since the pirates had found such good cheer, and they fell to banqueting and carousing with keen zest.

L'Ollonois and his army possessed themselves of the town and settled down to a two weeks' visit. Meanwhile, searching parties scoured the woods in search of the Spaniards and their riches. A few were taken prisoners and put to the torture to disclose the hiding-places and lurking-holes of their friends. But the Spaniards had buried their treasures underground, and led the pirates such a will-o'-the-wisp chase through the tangled woods that not many were caught.

Having by this time grown tired of eating and drinking, L'Ollonois ordered an advance on Gibraltar. But the people of Gibraltar had been well employed during these two weeks; earth-works were thrown up, batteries mounted, passages barricaded, and eight hundred men stationed to defend the place. When L'Ollonois saw the royal standard of Spain floating proudly over the town, and every preparation made for a stout resistance, he called a council of war. After a fiery harangue he made his officers and men promise to follow and obey him, and threatened to pistol any who showed fear. Then he cast anchor,

landed with three hundred and eighty men, and advanced resolutely upon the town.

But the usual road through the low, marshy woods had been barricaded ; trees had been felled and thrown across all the open spaces, and the only approach lay across a heavy bog which led into the very teeth of the Spanish batteries. As they advanced the pirates cut down branches of trees and covered the ground with them so as not to sink ankle deep in mire and mud. But for all their courage they quailed before the deafening and blinding storm of shot and missiles that met them in the face as they reached the outer edge of the woods. They had come full upon a breast-work mounted with six heavy guns. And then a furious sally of the Spaniards swept the buccaneers before them and forced them to retreat.

Again L'Ollonois advanced to the attack and again the Spaniards let fly their shot with murderous effect. Force could never carry this redoubt, but stratagem might, and the pirate chief decided to try a ruse. The order ran through the lines for every man to take to his heels and run. The Spaniards cried, "They flee, they flee !" and rushed headlong in pursuit, following far into the woods after the wily fugitives. Then came a sharp order ; the pirates faced about and fell upon their pursuers with sword and cutlass. The muskets of the Spaniards were of little use

in a hand-to-hand fight, and the men were mowed down like wheat under the scythe.

Cutting their way back to the batteries, the buccaneers swept all before them. First the forts, then the town, were captured ; the Spanish colors were hauled down and the pirate flag run up in its stead. All the provisions were collected for the use of the pirates, and while the Spanish prisoners died of hunger, their captors revelled.

For four weeks L' Ollonois lived in Gibraltar. Then he sent his ultimatum to the Spaniards, who had fled to the woods : ten thousand pieces of eight delivered in two days, or the town would be laid in ashes. At the end of the two days he began to put his threat into execution, and the inhabitants, seeing that he meant what he said, hurriedly collected the money, and were glad to buy their homes and their freedom at the price of their wealth. Returning to Maracaibo L' Ollonois claimed an even heavier ransom, and sailed away laden with riches and spoils.

Heading northward, the pirate fleet dropped anchor at Cow Island, which was one of their usual resorts for revictualling, trading, and storing their stolen goods. There they went through with the careful, just, and laborious division of the plunder. It was an important ceremony, and was carried out with exactitude and a strict regard for pirate laws. Accounts were made up, the silks, linen, and jewels were appraised with

amusing disregard or ignorance of value, but with great solemnity, and every man was put on his oath to be an honest rogue and not conceal or take anything from the common stock.

Then came a division of the gains from high to low degree, every one receiving his due and lawful share. The wounded were the first to be given their dividends, and they were allotted an extra sum as compensation for the loss of limbs or other serious mishaps. Even the dead were not forgotten, and their shares were reserved for their nearest relations or lawful heirs. As soon as this equitable transaction had been completed with mutual concord and satisfaction, the jolly pirates sailed for Tortuga, where they squandered in a few weeks what had cost so much bloodshed, misery, and ruin to accumulate.

L'Ollonois had now acquired a widespread reputation as a daring and successful buccaneer. Men flocked to enroll themselves under his colors, and he was overrun by applicants eager to seek their fortunes under his leadership. It was not long before he was on the water again, with a fleet of six ships and seven hundred men. Plunder, murder, and fire marked his course. He captured fishing fleets of canoes with their loads of tortoises, sacked Indian villages on the coast, burned Spanish storehouses, seized Spanish ships, and tortured Spanish prisoners.

In vain did Spanish soldiers lie in ambushade,

or make fiery onslaughts ; with sword and deadly fire-balls the pirates fell on them and annihilated them. In vain did the people flee to the woods, carrying with them their money and treasures ; the pirates ferreted them out like rats and robbed them of all they could find. Sometimes, however, it is pleasant to read that the rabid freebooters were disappointed in their search and discovered only a few leathern sacks filled with indigo.

But even after many weeks spent in looting and sacking, the hoard was not rich in pieces of eight. Those who were new to the business had expected to amass a fortune in a few days, and thought that pieces of eight "were gathered as easily as pears from a tree." There began to be a feeling of discontent, and sullen grumblings were heard. Finally, when L'Ollonais called a council and proposed to sail for Guatemala, the brooding insubordination broke out.

Two of the ringleaders, Moses Vanclein and Pierre le Picard, urged secession and induced the majority of the company to strike. Sedition is contagious, and L'Ollonais suddenly found himself a disgraced and deserted leader. The rebels hoisted sail and sped out to sea on an independent cruise, carrying with them all the small vessels in the fleet, and L'Ollonais was left alone in the Gulf of Honduras. It was at the season of the reflux of waters from the gulf, and the heavy pirate ship was caught in a trap. She

could not sail out, and was forced to lie at anchor where she was.

L'Ollonois and his crew began to suffer from starvation. Day after day they went ashore in search of food, but the country had been swept clean of provisions, and they were reduced to the point of killing and eating monkeys. At last, when they were driven to despair, the waters of the gulf began to flow back, and the ship was worked cautiously along the shore. Keeping close to the land and steering southward, the pirates had reached a jutting cape on the Mosquito Coast, near the De las Pertas islands, when the ship pitched suddenly on to a sandbank.

Here was a new disaster ! Guns, iron, and all heavy articles were thrown overboard, but she stuck fast, and no effort could get her into deep water again. Making the best of his misfortune, L'Ollonois now decided to break up the ship and out of the timber build a long-boat. This was a long and tedious piece of work, and meanwhile the pirates settled down on the islands for a six months' stay. They started a vegetable garden, sowed French beans and other seeds, and raised different crops. While they were waiting for these to grow, which seems to have been a rapid affair in that tropical climate if we can rely on Mr. Exqueleming, they lived on the fruits of the islands, — bananas, "racoven," ananas. It was a regular camping-out party.

At last the long-boat was finished, but it was too small to take them all, so lots were drawn, and one-half of the party set out with L'Ollonois, promising to return for their comrades. But a grim Nemesis was tracking the steps of the wicked buccaneer. Having landed at the mouth of the river Nicaragua, he was set upon by a ferocious band of Indians and Spaniards, and escaped to the boat with only a few of his followers. Then, instead of returning to those he had left behind on the De las Pertas islands, his evil genius carried him to the Gulf of Darien.

There he fell among a tribe of savage and ferocious Indians, who took him prisoner and doomed him to a fate more terrible than any he had himself devised for his victims. He was torn limb from limb, and thrown piecemeal into the fire, and his ashes were scattered to the wind, that not a grain of his inhuman body should remain upon the earth.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE SEA-KING OF THE WEST INDIES

GREATER far than the clever and cruel L'Ollonais, greater than any of the world's corsair chiefs since the days of the Barbarossas of Barbary, was Henry Morgan, the sea-king of the Caribbees. He was not only one of the most famous pirates in the annals of history, and the greatest of the magnates who ruled the big pirate trusts of the West Indies, but he was a genius in strategy and command.

The quiet, respectable, and hard-working farmer stock has given to the world many noted men — judges, statesmen, presidents — but seldom has it taken such a freak as to breed a pirate. There was a rich yeoman who lived on his broad farms in Wales, and who belonged to a well-known family of the country-side. Many laborers worked under him, and he tilled his fields and looked after his flocks with laudable regularity. One would not have supposed that from this stanch and sedate foundation would spring a fiery and ferocious spirit. But there must have been some wilder blood than we know of in the old Welsh

yeoman for him to have been the father of Henry Morgan.

The young farmer boy soon showed his distaste for rural and peaceful occupations. He had no desire and no intention to follow his father's calling; what he wanted was excitement, freedom, adventure. As he grew older he became more and more restless and discontented, and then, one day, he left home and went to seek his fortunes in the nearest seaport town. There he found several ships lying at anchor and lading merchandise for the West Indian mart. On one of these he determined to seek service, and not many days later he was leaving behind him the shores of Wales, and sailing westward, bound for the island of Barbadoes.

Although he had come to the land of the free, the first thing that happened to him when he touched shore was to be sold into slavery by the captain of the ship. It was a heavy price to pay for his liberty, but he seems to have served his term without grumbling, although with some hardening, perhaps, of his already reckless heart. He had entered a vicious school, and learned its lessons only too well. As soon as he had worked out his term and regained his freedom, he went to Jamaica, the headquarters of the British buccaneers. And there, finding two pirate vessels that were on the point of setting sail on a cruise, he joined the crew and threw in his fortunes with the freebooters.

Here at last he had hit upon a vocation that appealed to him! He now devoted himself in earnest to studying the methods and manners of his new confraternity, and was so apt a pupil that he soon trained himself to be a capable seaman, and a daring, skilful fighter. But he was not one to stay long in a subordinate position; after two or three successful voyages that brought him in a substantial portion of profits, he had amassed a little heap of pieces of eight, enough to buy a share in an independent craft. Some of his comrades were ready to join forces and funds with him, and together they formed a pirate stock company and invested in a small vessel. And we are not surprised to hear that Morgan was unanimously chosen as captain of the company.

This was his first independent start in life, the first chance he had had to show his ability as a leader, his resolution and dash, and he took full advantage of the opportunity. Setting sail in his new ship for the coasts of Campeche, he captured several merchant vessels, and returned after a brilliant cruise laden with prizes and plunder.

On dropping anchor in the home port, Morgan found that the old and distinguished pirate admiral, Mansvelt, was equipping a large fleet for an extensive piratical expedition. The able veteran was at once attracted by the daring and successful young captain, and, judging him to be a man of talent, he offered to make him vice-admiral of his

fleet. By this stroke of fortune Morgan reached at a bound almost the highest position in his profession.

The fleet of fifteen ships set sail from Jamaica and headed almost due south for the thin strip of continent at Costa Rica. Off the coast lay the island of St. Catharine, which belonged to Spain, and which Mansvelt coveted as a convenient station and fortress for a pirate colony. It was near the rich Panama region, and, if well established at this strong base, the freebooters could swoop down upon the coast in a series of rapid and bewildering descents.

With pirates, to want is to take. So Mansvelt and his vice-admiral landed a large part of their five hundred men and stormed the castle. Their dashing assault filled the Spaniards with consternation, and the garrison hastily surrendered. All the forts, excepting one, were demolished, an adjoining islet was captured and fortified, and Mansvelt's lieutenant, Le Sieur Simon, was left with a hundred men to hold their new possessions, throw up defences, and cultivate the land, while the chief himself sped back to Jamaica for reënforcements.

Mansvelt's pet project was to found an independent piratical state on his newly conquered island, and he did his best to enlist the help and sympathy of the governor of Jamaica. But his scheme was not approved of in high places; the

governor, so far from being enthusiastic over the plan, discouraged it and refused to lend his support. It was one thing to increase the trade and prosperity of Jamaica by harboring and abetting pirates in his own dominions, and quite another thing to aid in establishing an independent and dangerous pirate republic. So the scheme failed ; no recruits arrived at St. Catharine, but the Spaniards came and recaptured the island, taking *Sieur Simon* prisoner. Meanwhile, *Mansvelt* died at *Tortuga*, and the visionary scheme of a pirate *Arcadia* was never carried out. For *Morgan* was of a more practical and material turn of mind, and his ambitions were bounded by his self-interest. A convenient storehouse for plunder was all that he required ; his aim was to found a private fortune, not a pirate state.

The death of *Mansvelt* left Captain *Morgan* at the head of his profession, the recognized leader of the West Indian pirates. He immediately went to work to equip a fleet. Already popular as a commander, with a reputation for boldness and energy, he found no difficulty in getting together a squadron of twelve vessels and seven hundred fighting men. "Where shall we go?" This was the first question propounded at the general councils, and it always started a lively discussion. Freedom of speech was one of the laws of the meeting, and every man voiced his own opinion. First one place was proposed, then another, and

the argument often grew warm as the pirate who had the floor urged his particular scheme with enthusiasm, and his comrades criticised it with equal heat.

The place finally chosen by Captain Morgan's council, which was to be honored by a visit from the freebooters, was a fresh and virgin field. It had never before been sacked ; it had lain in the peaceful possession of its riches without molestation, and had carried on its trade on cash payments, until, so the report ran, the town was full of pieces of eight. This happy town that had so far been safe from fire and sword, from lootings and blackmail, was Puerto Principe, in the heart of Cuba. Its position inland had been its protection in the past, but the armies of Captain Morgan stopped neither at forests, bogs, nor rivers.

When the goal had been decided on, orders were given to weigh anchor, and the fleet made sail for the port nearest to Puerto Principe. During the run the English pirates discussed freely the coming attack and their prospects of success, and gloated over an easy capture and rich plunder. Little did they dream that one of the Spanish prisoners they had on board understood English and was listening with eager ears to every word of their plans. As soon as the fleet dropped anchor in the bay on the south coast of Cuba, the Spanish prisoner managed to escape

during the night, jumped overboard, and swam for the shore. Then he ran his fleetest through the woods and reached Puerto Principe in time to give warning of the attack.

The governor acted promptly. He roused the people of the town, commanded them to hide their riches, and then help him to throw up defences. Freeman and slaves worked side by side, felling trees, building barricades, and dragging cannon. Ambuscades were scattered through the woods, and a strong detachment of men stationed behind the breastwork. And when Captain Morgan advanced at the head of his company he found every passage and avenue to the town thoroughly defended. But this did not discourage him ; if he could not go through the barricades, he could go around them. It was difficult and tedious for the pirates to thread their way through the dense undergrowth of the forest, but they succeeded in doing it. By taking a roundabout way, they turned the flank of the defences and came out on the great open plain, called the Sheet, which surrounds the town.

On reaching the edge of the woods, Captain Morgan marshalled his forces, and, with drums beating and colors flying, advanced in good marching order. Then down swept a troop of cavalry, charging full speed upon the pirate ranks. The governor rode at the head of his horse ; he expected to see the oncoming line waver and give way,

then turn and flee before the impetuous rush of the cavalry. But no ; a quick order, and the pirates had formed into a semicircle ; as the troop dashed onward, the line opened and surrounded them. Swords and cutlasses flashed in the air, pistols were fired point-blank, the governor fell, severely wounded, riderless horses galloped over the plain, and the cavalry troop was disorganized. The Spaniards were no match for the pirates in the use of short arms ; they retreated to the woods, and left the field to their enemies.

On rushed the pirates to the gates of the town ; the inhabitants had intrenched themselves, and held the robbers at bay for some time. But Morgan and his men were bulldog fighters and hard to resist. Once within the streets they had the advantage, for there, if force failed, they could win by threats. The alternative of a voluntary surrender or the town laid in ashes usually brought prompt capitulation. The people of Puerto Principe gave up the fight rather than see their homes in flames.

Then followed the outrages and villanies of a band of ruffians, the horrors of pillage, torture, and starvation. The people were huddled together in the different churches, and left there to die of hunger, while the town was ransacked from end to end. When the provisions were exhausted and there was nothing left to rob, Morgan arrogantly demanded a double ransom, one



for the town, to redeem it from fire, and one for the people, to avoid wholesale deportation to Jamaica.

But the prisoners had received stealthy messages from the governor of Santiago promising aid, and urging them to gain time by every device of delays and excuses. One of these messages was intercepted by the pirates, and for the next twenty-four hours there was a good deal of hurry and bustle in the robber camp. Pieces of eight, plate, and merchandise were hastily carted to the shore, and tumbled into the ships' holds. Lines of pirates could be seen hurrying to and fro between the bay and the town, bending under clinking bags and bales.

A peremptory order was sent by Captain Morgan to the Spaniards, giving a day's time, and no longer, for the payment of the ransom. But this was more bluster than firmness, for when the next day came and no money was paid down, the pirate chief abated his demands. A hundred head of oxen or cows, delivered on board ship, and a load of salt, would appease him; he was beginning to think more of meat than of money, and provisions were worth more than plate when men were hungry. The main thing was to make sail before that army of relief should arrive. And thus, with undignified haste, the great Captain Morgan retired from Puerto Principe. But we must at least give the rogue his due, and praise his good faith in giving up the hostages after the last cow had been

killed and salted, and his forbearance in not leaving a lighted match near some pile of rubbish, for after all it was a small booty that he was carrying away, and the Spaniards had tricked him.

Great was the disappointment among the avaricious thieves when an account of stock was taken and the dividends were declared. The fleet had retired to a small island for the ceremony of the division of the spoils, and, as the money was counted and the goods appraised, the frowns and mutterings grew deeper and louder. Only fifty thousand pieces of eight, about sixty-three thousand dollars, as the result of that momentous expedition ! The cost of fitting out the fleet had been heavy ; and after paying the salaries, general expenses, and special awards, what would there be left to divide between almost seven hundred greedy spendthrifts ? Not even enough to pay the debts that they had left behind them in Jamaica. The feeling of resentment was spreading into a mutiny.

But this was not all. There had been a quarrel, a duel, and a base murder between a Frenchman and an Englishman. The Britishers and Walloons took sides, and there was a split in the crews. The treacherous blow had been dealt by an English sailor ; Captain Morgan threw him in irons and promised justice in the shape of a summary hanging as soon as the fleet touched at Jamaica. But harmony was at an end, the two

factions could not agree, and the French decided to part company. So Captain Morgan returned to his headquarters alone with his Englishmen and with fewer ships than when he had started.

Yet such was the personal magnetism of the pirate chief, and so great the confidence he inspired, that this half-failure did not destroy his prestige. Men still believed in him. His word alone could win implicit reliance. His vigor, enthusiasm, and stupendous self-assurance were contagious, and infused new spirit into his men. He must have been a born orator, for all he had to do was to talk in his plausible, confident way, and his hearers believed every word of his highly colored speeches.

It took only a few days of stump speaking for Captain Morgan to gather a following of four hundred and sixty fighting men, and a motley collection of boats and vessels to the number of nine sail. With these he put to sea, keeping meanwhile his own counsel, and confiding to no one his nefarious plans. The bolder the project the more it should be kept in solitary confinement. A coup d'état gains power by secrecy, and discussion weakens belief. A dictatorship was better suited to Captain Morgan's temperament than a presidency, and he understood the strength of silence. So not until the fleet had sighted Costa Rica did he tell his captains of his scheme, and even then he did not call a council, but declared his inten-

tions. This was an innovation in pirate laws. Morgan had taken the law into his own hands, abolished suffrage, smashed the republic, and set up the rule of one.

His assumption of despotism did not rouse great opposition. He was going to Porto Bello, he told them; the attack would be made by night, and every corner of the city sacked. It could not fail to succeed, since he had kept it a secret in his own mind; there had been no talk about it, and no traitor had been able to announce their coming. Some objected that the force was too small to assault so strong a city, but Morgan silenced them. "If our numbers are small, our hearts are great," he said, "and the fewer the men, the bigger the shares." He knew where to touch them, on their pride and their greed. And that settled the matter. To Porto Bello they would go.

It was a daring enterprise. Porto Bello was counted the strongest city in the West Indies next to Havana and Cartagena. Two impregnable castles defended the entrance to the port; no boat could pass unchallenged. Three hundred soldiers manned the batteries. And they had need to protect the town, for here were the storehouses for the riches of Panama, and here the mule trains brought the plate that was to be shipped in galleons to Spain. Near by were the Gulf of Darien, and Nombre de Dios, the old haunts of Francis Drake. How these names

bring up the spirit of the great pioneer pirate of the West Indies !

Every crevice of the coast was known to Morgan, every road and path and stream. In the dusk of the evening he brought his ships to a silent bay, west of Porto Bello, where a river opened its forked mouth. One by one, like a file of ghosts, the ships stole up between the river banks, and in the dead of night dropped anchor in a quiet river harbor. Here the men slipped silently into their small boats and canoes and paddled up-stream. Only a few were left to hold the ships and carry them down river. By midnight the attacking party had reached a landing where they left their canoes and went ashore. From there Morgan marched his men through the woods till they came within sight of the city outposts. Then he called a halt.

A small party was sent ahead to seize the sentry, and he was used as information bureau and spokesman. Next, Morgan drew a close cordon around the castle and demanded its immediate surrender ; resist, and there would be no quarter, so said the despot, and this time he meant to keep his word. The only answer was a volley of shot. The castle guns alarmed the city, and now all was astir.

The Spaniards started out with their usual pluck. They never gave in easily ; they fought bravely and stoutly, but somehow they almost always gave in before the end. They rarely suc-

ceeded in keeping their stand against the pirates ; they were not so well trained, not so skilful, not such good marksmen, and they had not the ruffians' tough endurance. After a sturdy resistance the castle hung out a white flag, and the pirates walked in. Morgan thought to strike terror to the city by making an example of these obstinate Spaniards, and carrying out his threat of "no quarter." But it would take long to put each one to the sword, so he devised a more fiendish plan. The Spanish officers and soldiers were shut up in one of the rooms of the castle, the powder magazine was set on fire, and the whole structure was blown into the air.

"This being done, they pursued the course of their victory," writes Exquemeling, with complacency. The swift and wholesale method of destruction probably appealed to him as clever and practical. But although the pirate historian became inured to the savage practices of war, he shows a strong feeling of horror and disapproval when speaking of the tortures and other brutal customs of his pirate brethren.

So the pirates pursued their course and entered the city. There all was confusion and disorder. Men and women hurried here and there, possessed by the one idea of saving their riches ; gold and jewels were thrown into wells and cisterns ; holes were dug in the ground and treasures buried deep under the earth. The people seemed to give no

thought to defending their homes or their city, and the governor made fruitless efforts to rally the citizens. Seeing that it was hopeless to expect any help from people half crazed with fear, he retired to one of the castles and opened fire on the pirates. This governor of Porto Bello was a man of invincible spirit; win or die, was his motto, and he gave the freebooters a very uncomfortable half-day.

Fast and furious came the firing from the castle. The governor had shut himself up there to fight to the death, and from break of day till noon he held the fort unwaveringly. Time after time the attacking parties were driven back, and after hours of fighting no advance had been made. Every known device was brought into use, fireballs were thrown at the castle doors, but every new attempt was met and defeated. Stones, earthen pots full of powder, and every kind of combustibles were dropped by the besieged over the castle walls.

It was a test for Captain Morgan; he was determined not to give up, yet he had never been in such a difficult position. The stubborn defence of the Spaniards was ruining his whole enterprise, and he began to despair of success. "Hereupon," writes Exquemeling, "many faint and calm meditations came into his mind." We may be allowed to doubt whether they were either "faint" or "calm," whatever his external demeanor was, but

at all events they were deep and crafty. The result of these cogitations was original, and showed a power of invention and an irony truly demoniac. Undoubtedly the devil thought it a very witty and ingenious device.

The pirates seemed always to have a special attraction toward monks and nuns. One of the first things they did on capturing a town was to rush to the convents or monasteries and make prisoners of these peaceful and benevolent people. This had happened at Porto Bello, where scores of the sisters and brothers of the religious orders had been seized early in the day. And now it entered Captain Morgan's fertile brain to put these innocent people to his own use. He ordered a dozen large ladders to be knocked together in great haste; they were to be broad enough for four men to mount abreast, and high enough to reach the top of the fortifications.

Then he commanded the monks and nuns to carry them under the castle and stand them up against the walls, and at the point of the sword they were forced to do his bidding. Morgan thought that the governor would not fire on his defenceless religious brethren, but he had not counted on the Spartan resolve of his opponent. Stones and shot fell on the unprotected heads of those who bore the ladders; they were caught between the upper and the nether millstones, for if they retreated, they were received by the pirates



at the pistol's muzzle, and if they advanced, they were shot down by the besieged.

At last the pitiful work was accomplished. Many of the ladder bearers lay dead upon the ground, and the pirates rushed over their bodies. Like so many tigers they scaled the walls, cutlass and fireballs in hand. The Spaniards were powerless before the fierce assault ; men threw down their arms and begged for quarter. The governor alone would not ask for mercy. He stood there like a wrathful avenger, dealing blows to any who came near him, cutting down some of his own soldiers because they did not stand to their arms. When asked if he would have quarter, he cried, "Never ; I had rather die as a valiant soldier than be hanged as a coward !" And so he did die, riddled with wounds, stubborn in his valor to the end.

The last hope of the city had fallen, and Morgan was master of the place. For two weeks Porto Bello was given over to plunder and feasting, while the inhabitants were packed into the castle and kept under a strong guard. Then, when the pirate chief began to think of leaving, he sent in his claim for a hundred thousand pieces of eight as ransom. A few hours later a messenger was seen galloping over the road to Panama. Urgent prayers of help went to the president. A body of soldiers was sent to the relief of the prisoners, but was met by the pirates in a narrow defile and

utterly routed. And after a bootless threat of vengeance, the president of Panama left the Porto Bellians to their own salvation.

While the ransom was being collected and paid, a complimentary passage at arms took place between the president and Morgan. How had four hundred men, without cannon, and nothing but their small arms, captured the strongly fortified city of Porto Bello? This was what puzzled the Spanish president, and roused both his curiosity and admiration. Being a man of an inquiring turn of mind, he sent a deputy to the pirate commander, and asked him, with his compliments, if he would favor him with the loan of one of the arms that conquered Porto Bello.

The ambassador was received with courteous and extreme politeness, and Morgan gave him a pistol with a few small bullets to carry back to his master, and a polite message begging the president "to accept that slender pattern of the arms where-with he had taken Porto Bello, and keep them for a twelvemonth ; after which time he promised to come to Panama and fetch them away."

The president of Panama found that he had landed himself in trouble, and that Captain Morgan had been over-polite. Hastily he returned the weapon with his best thanks and the gift of a gold ring, begging his adversary not to trouble himself to call at Panama, as his reception would not be so much to his liking as it had been at Porto Bello.

There is no record of Morgan's having answered this last message. He intended to have the final word, but waited until he could deliver it from the muzzle of his pistol.

After this pleasant episode, Captain Morgan set sail with all his ships for the island of Cuba, where in "quiet and repose" he made a division of the spoils. It was a magnificent treasure — jewels, silks, linen, cloth, and two hundred and fifty thousand pieces of eight. There were no grumblings heard when the new trust company declared its dividends.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE WONDERFUL EXPLOITS OF CAPTAIN MORGAN

THE name of Captain Morgan had become famous throughout the West Indies. He had but to announce an expedition for ships and sailors to come crowding to the meeting-place. Motley assortments of boats and vessels, large and small, of men of many tongues, hurried from Tortuga, Hayti, and Jamaica. It was at Cow Island that a gathering had been called for a new venture. The captains were all there, almost the whole fleet had assembled, when a smart thirty-six-gun ship sailed jauntily into port. She was a contribution from the governor of Jamaica, freshly arrived from English shores, and despatched with speed to his dear friend Captain Morgan.

Queen Elizabeth had long before set the fashion for the patronage of piracy. She had been most successful in privately helping what she publicly disowned. But the official representatives of England in the distant Caribbean Sea had no need of subterfuges. They frankly encouraged a business that brought in so much wealth, for the pirates

threw away in Jamaica what they had stolen on the Spanish main. It was all profit and no loss to the trade.

The arrival of this dapper thirty-six turned the vain head of Captain Morgan. He began to think that he was omnipotent, and that he had but to desire a thing for it to be laid at his feet. Not content with one strong ship he wanted more, and he now turned his covetous eyes upon another thirty-six-gun vessel, belonging to the French, that lay at anchor close to his moorings. But this time blandishments were of no avail, and although he exerted his whole store of plausible and persuasive powers, he failed to win his point. The French captain flatly refused to join the expedition.

The grudge between the English and the French had been accumulating fuel and was ready to burst into flames at the touch of a match. Captain Morgan laid the fuse. He resented the refusal of the French captain to join forces with him, and resolved to be revenged. Inviting the French commander and several of his officers to dine with him on board his new English ship, he ordered them to be seized and made prisoners as soon as they had set foot on deck. Little did he think that a tragedy was to follow in swift retribution.

Being very well satisfied with himself, Morgan called a meeting and settled on the goal of the expedition. This time it was to be the island of Savona, where the pirates were to lie in waiting for

the Spanish merchant fleet that was expected to pass that way. Elated at the prospect of new plunder, the jolly freebooters gave themselves up to rejoicings. They fired guns and drank toasts, until the whole ship's company were in a state of helpless hilarity. Not a man who was not drunk, excepting the French prisoners.

Suddenly a rending noise, a terrific explosion, and the whole ship, with three hundred and fifty Englishmen on board, was blown into the air. Morgan and his officers, about thirty men in all, were in the main cabin, at some distance from the powder magazine, and they alone were saved. Dismay and consternation filled the rest of the fleet. The French prisoners were suspected of having destroyed the ship and themselves with it out of revenge, and the feud between the two nations increased. Morgan seized the French vessel in the offing and sent it to Jamaica, and the French were authorized to cruise on English pirates wherever they found them.

At last the filibustering fleet set sail; fifteen vessels and almost a thousand men. But Captain Morgan was forced to run up his flag on a small fourteen-gun ship, instead of a gallant thirty-six. Heading for the island of Savona, the fleet ran into contrary winds which scattered the vessels and delayed them for several weeks. After many vicissitudes, interspersed with raids on shore for provisions and water, Captain Morgan reached the

rendezvous with only eight small ships and five hundred men. Anxiously he scanned the horizon, watching with growing concern and impatience for any sign of the missing sail. But the empty stretch of water gave him no comfort. Day after day passed and still no sign of the stragglers, and, tired of waiting, Morgan decided to try his luck without them.

One of his captains, a former follower of L'Ollonois, suggested Maracaibo as a fertile field for plunder. He was familiar with every entrance and approach to the city and could guide the party in safety to the inner harbor. Morgan approved of the scheme, and the squadron set sail. As he approached the coast of South America, he made the runs by night, and moored his ships by day in some hidden bay in the neighboring islands. The last run brought him to the bar of Maracaibo lake, and at break of day the Spaniards awoke to see a squadron of pirate ships under their guns.

Since L'Ollonois had paid his memorable visit, a new fort had been built at the entrance, and the battery of sixteen heavy guns now let fly shot and shell in a warm welcome. This was an unexpected reception, but Morgan answered fire, and a spirited contest was kept up until nightfall. Under shelter of the darkness the pirates crept close alongshore, landed below the fort, and cautiously approached. Not a sound or a sign came from the Spaniards; the place was deserted, but

a trap had been left behind. This sudden flight, without apparent cause, roused the suspicions of the wily pirate chief; treachery seemed to lurk in the stillness. He ordered the fort to be carefully examined, and beside a train of powder was found a slow-match burning steadily to their destruction. A few minutes later and the fortress with the whole gang of pirates would have been blown into atoms.

Instead of this well-deserved death and a shortened career, Morgan had the luck to find a large store of powder, bullets, and muskets to replenish his stock. On the following day the ships crossed the bar, but the waters of the lake were low, and the large sandbank at the entrance lay uncovered along its whole length. The pirates were forced to take to their boats and canoes, with only their small arms for defence. But they had nothing to fear from the Spaniards; the people had fled as from the pestilence. Forts were abandoned, the streets empty, and the entire city left undefended.

Morgan walked unhindered into Maracaibo, and established himself in state for one of his orgies of plunder and cruelty. Parties were sent into the woods to capture the Spaniards who had fled there for security, and these unfortunates were put to the rack to make them disclose the hiding-places of their riches. The tortures inflicted by the pirates were no worse than those practised



by the Inquisition, but they had not the merit of even religious bigotry for their motive ; nothing more than inhuman greed, and an inherited race hatred.

The countless successes and atrocities of the pirates inspired whole communities with such terror and unreasoning fear that they fled before them in a mass. They seized what treasures they could carry, and stampeded to the woods. But their devices to hide themselves and their goods were of little use, for the indefatigable pirates rarely failed to discover them. When Morgan moved on from Maracaibo to Gibraltar, as L'Ollonais had done before him, he found an abandoned city, of which he took possession without delay.

The governor had fled for refuge to the top of a steep and almost inaccessible mountain, and for once led the pirates on a fool's chase to find him. For two weeks they waded through water waist-deep, crossed swollen rivers, dragged themselves painfully through bogs and swamps. Heavy rains drenched them and soaked their powder and baggage, and they finally returned to Gibraltar without the governor. After this experience their spirits were somewhat dampened, and they decided to return to Maracaibo. But here a new mishap awaited them.

Consternation and despair filled Captain Morgan and his followers at the news that greeted them in Maracaibo. Three Spanish men-of-war guarded

the narrow exit of the lake ! The largest carried forty guns, and the smallest no less than twenty-four. A boat sent out to reconnoitre confirmed the report. Here was the arch pirate caught in a trap, with no way out by sea or land, and completely overpowered in strength, for his largest ship was mounted with only fourteen small guns. All hope of escape seemed vain, and Morgan's first feeling was to give himself up for lost. But something must be done, and the necessity for action brought back his courage.

With his usual bold insolence he sent a deputy to the Spanish admiral demanding a heavy ransom for the town of Maracaibo. The answer was an elaborate official letter from Don Alonzo del Campo y Espinosa, admiral of the Spanish fleet, to Captain Morgan, commander of the pirates.

The admiral demanded the full surrender of all the plundered goods ; on this condition the pirates would be allowed to depart, otherwise they would be exterminated. The pirates in a body indignantly refused the demand ; rather than give up what they had so hardly won, they would fight to the last drop of blood in their bodies. Although the freebooters were determined to fight, Morgan still used evasions. He offered to spare Maracaibo without ransom, and set at liberty all his prisoners and hostages. But the admiral was obdurate.

The pirates now brought into play all their in-

genuity. They had never been in such need of it before. A general council was called for deliberation; every one was asked to make suggestions, and the cleverest proposition came, not from Morgan and his captains, but from one of the seamen. "I will undertake to destroy the biggest of those vessels with only twelve men," he declared, and the way he intended to do it was with a counterfeit ship, mounted with counterfeit cannon, and manned by counterfeit men, and this sham ship was to be a fire-ship.

It was a device just after the marauders' hearts, and they made their preparations for it with huge enjoyment. A vessel, which they had captured up Gibraltar River, was covered with pitch, tar, and brimstone; great logs smeared with tar were placed in the ports, and under each of these sham guns was piled a heap of powder. Next, the pirates took shorter logs of wood, dressed them in mens' clothes, with hats or Montera caps on their heads, and armed them with swords, muskets, and cutlasses in ferocious guise. These were set up and fastened firmly on deck in a most formidable array and in studied variety of pose. Then English colors were hoisted at the masthead, and the sham ship looked like a veritable man-of-war.

When all was ready, and the men had taken their oath to fight to the death, the little pirate fleet weighed anchor. The prisoners had been

packed into one of the boats ; in another had been stored the plate and jewels ; and still another held the bales of merchandise ; each boat being defended by twelve men. In advance went the fire-ship, leading the way in pomp. The Spanish men-of-war rode at anchor in the middle of the entrance to the lake. On came the puny pirate boats until almost within gunshot ; then they dropped anchor for the night, keeping vigilant watch on the enemy.

At dawn of day, Morgan steered straight for the Spanish squadron. The disguised fire-ship ran alongside the large man-of-war and grappled her. The Spaniards despised the little foe and thought to make her an easy prey ; too late they discovered their mistake. All their frantic efforts could not release them from the deadly embrace. The mock battle ship was fired ; in an instant the two, locked tightly together, were in a sea of flame. The tongues of fire wrapped the timber, and leaped up the masts ; the whole stern was a molten mass, and the prow, pitching into the water, sank to the bottom.

Panic seized the Spaniards at the loss of the gallant flag-ship. The second vessel took to her heels and fled toward the shore, under the lee of the castle, and there she was scuttled by her crew and sank midway on the sands. But the shallow water left her half uncovered, and to complete her destruction the Spaniards set fire to the half-

drowned hulk. Deserted by her consort, the third vessel was easily seized, and the pirates scored a complete victory.

But their way to the sea was not yet clear, for they must run the gauntlet of the outer castle. The Spanish admiral had escaped from his burning ship, and was preparing to pour his shot into the pirate cockleshells, as they passed through the narrow channel. Again it was brains and not brawn that must save the trapped buccaneers. As usual Captain Morgan began his machinations by insolent demands. He called for an exorbitant fire insurance from the town of Maracaibo. The people had learned that Morgan's threats were not empty words, and they paid their twenty thousand pieces of eight, and five hundred cattle, without a murmur.

Meanwhile, divers had been at work among the wreckage of the Spanish ship that had gone to the bottom, and rich booty was recovered; plate and valuables, and many thousand pieces of eight. The entire plunder amounted to two hundred and fifty thousand pieces of eight in money and jewels, besides a great quantity of merchandise and slaves. Captain Morgan had no intention of risking this fortune to the chances of storm and battle, or the dishonesty of his captains, for the bulk of it lay in one of the smaller vessels. So he called a general meeting, and there, between the walls of the town and the guns of the castle, hemmed in be-

tween two enemies and in the very jaws of destruction, the pirates divided the spoils. With as much deliberation as if they were hidden on an ocean island, they counted their money and valued their jewels, discussing the merits of rubies and diamonds, and testing the texture of velvets and silks. Every man received his share, and the glittering riches, for which they had fought and murdered and burned, were distributed among the different ships and boats.

Now all was ready for a trial. Captain Morgan had refused to give up his prisoners until he was safely out to sea, hoping to save himself through them. He now threatened to hang them all on the yardarm or throw them with stones around their necks into the lake, unless they obtained from the governor free passage for his squadron. The frightened prisoners sent a deputation to the castle, imploring Don Alonzo's mercy, and begging their miserable lives at the cost of an open exit for the foe. But the gallant admiral was firm. No supplications could turn him from his duty. Whether the prisoners hung or not, or were mowed down by his own shot, he would sink every pirate boat that passed his batteries.

The Spanish admiral was brave, but his adversary was cunning. If one stratagem failed, another would succeed. Captain Morgan ordered his men to embark in their canoes and row toward the shore. From morning till night canoes filled

with men left the pirate ships, and returned empty for another load. Almost the whole of the crews must have been landed by night-time; or so it seemed to the watchers in the castle, and this was what they were meant to think. But not a man went ashore; every return trip brought back the same number of men, lying flat in the bottom of the boats. It was a clever trick, and all day the farce of a false landing went on.

The Spaniards, meanwhile, prepared for a land attack from the rear. The guns were dragged across to the side away from the water, and the larger part of the garrison was stationed to receive the storming party. When darkness had shut down upon the lake and the land, Captain Morgan gave whispered orders. Anchors were weighed in silence. Without a sail set, the pirate-ships drifted stealthily out on the ebb-tide. Softly they slipped down the channel to the very foot of the fortress walls. Suddenly there was a cry of alarm within the castle, and a rushing and hurrying to and fro; guns were dragged frantically back, men ran in confusion to the front. But it was too late. The pirates had hoisted sail, and under a press of canvas and a fair wind were flying out to sea.

When out of gunshot, Captain Morgan sent back the prisoners, and then, with a parting salute of seven guns fired in scorn and derision, the pirate fleet spread northward for Jamaica.

## CHAPTER XX

### SOUTHWARD HO, TO PANAMA!

MORE and more ambitious grew the designs of the great corsair chief. As success followed him and Dame Fortune treated him as her favorite son, Morgan's thoughts of conquest took on the shape, not of piracy, but of invasion. Already he was planning an expedition to eclipse all previous ones. Letters were sent out to the governor of Tortuga, to every able and noted pirate, to the hunters and planters of Hayti. It was a rally call, a summons to the meet.

Men flocked from all sides ; boats, ships, and canoes arrived in eager haste and in motley array ; rough hunters tramped through the woods to gather at the meeting-place. A large fleet had assembled at the Tortuga port when Captain Morgan sailed in with colors flying and drums beating. The first care was to send a detachment of four ships in search of maize and corn, and another party of hunters to the woods to kill wild oxen and swine. The rest of the crews were kept busy cleaning, fitting, and rigging the vessels. When the provisions had been gathered, the fleet was ready to put to sea.



It was a smart little flock of sail that weighed anchor in the middle of December, 1670 : thirty-seven vessels, with two thousand fighting men, besides the sailors and boys. The admiral's ship mounted twenty-two heavy guns, and six smaller ones ; the other vessels carried all the way from four to twenty guns, and were well provided with fire-balls and ammunition of all kinds. Morgan divided the fleet into two squadrons, appointed a vice-admiral and other officers, and then in full meeting drew up the articles of agreement.

The pirate king was not wanting in greed. He arranged to have a hundredth part of all the plunder. There was a boom on the market ; stock was up, extra dividends were declared ; the receipts were expected to be large, and heavy premiums were placed on arms and legs. Prices had never been known to run so high on the pirate stock-exchange.

Southward ho, to Panama ! This was the unanimous cry of the captains. To the golden treasure house of the Spanish Main ! Morgan had given them their choice between Cartagena, Panama, and Vera Cruz. But there was no hesitation in casting the lot on the richest city of the continent.

The first step was to attack the small island of St. Catharine, which was a sort of convict station for the outlaws from Panama. There Morgan expected to provide himself with guides who

would lead his army across the difficult passes of the isthmus. The island was strongly girded by nine forts; the batteries were mounted with fifty-three guns, and there were ample stores of muskets and ammunition. The large fortress of Santa Teresa was a well-built castle, surrounded by a moat and by the surf-beaten rocks. With a strong garrison the island would have been impregnable, but there were less than two hundred soldiers within its walls, and the governor was a timid-hearted man, without the pluck to lead a forlorn hope.

On the first summons from Captain Morgan, the governor consented to surrender the island on condition that his own credit and that of his officers should be saved by making use of a stratagem of war. There was to be a mock assault by sea and land answered by a mock defence. The guns of the castle and the ships were to keep up a lively fire, but without shot. The governor was to be trapped and made prisoner after a lusty show of resistance.

The ingenious trick appealed to the pirate's cunning, and Captain Morgan agreed to carry out the plan. The farce was gone through, the sham battle was fought with a great deal of smoke and no shot, the castle was treacherously taken with a big display of force, and the island fell into the hands of the pirates. We do not hear what became of the governor. It is to be hoped

he was courtmartialed and shot if the pirates spared him.

Morgan found a vicious rogue and thief among the garrison, who well served his purpose as a guide, and he hired him to lead the way to Panama. But, before pressing on across the isthmus, it was necessary to capture the castle of Chagres, which stood on the northern coast in the direct line of approach. For this service Morgan despatched four ships and a small boat, so as not to arouse the alarm and suspicion of the people by the sudden appearance of his entire fleet.

To judge by the description of the castle given by Exquemeling, the pirate historian, Chagres must have been one of the most impregnable fortresses of the time. Perched on the summit of a high hill, surrounded by walls, palisades, and ditches, defended by bastions, breastworks, and batteries, reached only by a steep stairway cut in the rock and a drawbridge across the moat — what assailants could reach and much less capture so inaccessible a stronghold? One would think that none but an army of balloonists, with an outfit of twentieth-century electric, aerial guns, could storm and conquer this eagle's citadel.

That the pirates took Chagres is certain, but the way in which they took it rests solely on the veracity of Exquemeling. However, as he was there, he must have known, and this is his account of the affair.

The pirates anchored in the small port, landed under a murderous fire, and marched through the woods to the foot of the castle rock. With sword in one hand and fire-balls in the other, they stoutly tried to scale the walls. But the deadly fire from the fortress guns mowed them down with pitiless precision. Time after time they rushed to the attack ; again and again they were driven back.

Then, according to Exquemeling, there happened a very remarkable accident, at the moment when victory seemed hopeless. One of the pirates was wounded in the back with an arrow that pierced him through the body from side to side. But being a man of great valor, he coolly pulled out the arrow, wrapped some cotton around the end, and, fitting it into his musket, fired it back into the castle. The result was amazing. The cotton on the arrow was kindled by the powder, the arrow fell on some thatched roofs within the castle enclosure, the houses caught on fire, and the flames spread to the powder magazine, which exploded, and all this happened in a few moments without any apparent cause.

At the same time the pirates set fire to the palisades, and in the general confusion succeeded in making several breaches in the wall. After some brisk fighting the governor retired to an inner fort, but a well-aimed shot pierced his head and he fell dead. The garrison then surrendered ; there were not many left, only twenty able men

out of three hundred and fourteen. In point of figures we must make some allowance for the enthusiasm of the pirate historian.

Chagres taken, the way was open to Panama. But Panama had been warned, the garrison strengthened, ambuscades laid on the way, and an army more than three thousand strong was waiting to receive the invaders. To attack this large body of troops and a well-fortified city, Captain Morgan set out toward the middle of January, 1671, at the head of twelve hundred men, five boat-loads of artillery, and thirty-two guns.

The journey to Panama was long and difficult. Sometimes by land and sometimes by the river they made their way laboriously through tangles, marshes, and shallows. Hunger began to do its work, and when they came to a deserted ambuscade and found no food, they fell upon some empty leather bags and devoured them greedily. In vain they scoured the woods in search of something to eat; nothing but leaves, and grass, and herbs were left to keep them from starvation. At last they came upon some maize which they ate dry, so eager were they for food.

The hardships of that journey tried even the herculean powers of the veteran adventurers. Murmurings were heard and threats of revolt. Sickness, too, broke out, and discontent was rife. For nine days they had marched through barren

lands and deserted fields under the scorching sun or the torrents of tropical storms. At last, toward the close of the ninth day, they came upon a large drove of cattle in a deep valley. The first thing was to kill the oxen and asses, make fires, roast the meat, and eat the first straight meal they had tasted since they left Chagres. That same evening they came within sight of the highest steeple of Panama.

When the pirates saw that the goal of all their efforts and desires had been reached, they leaped and shouted for joy, and, reckless of being heard and discovered, they blew their trumpets and beat their drums in exultation. Then they bivouacked for the night, and slept the sound sleep of fatigue and content.

Early on the morning of the tenth day Captain Morgan marshalled his forces and advanced to the sound of drum and trumpet. Persuaded by his guides to take a roundabout road, he skirted through the woods to avoid the batteries of the town. On reaching the top of a low hill the pirates saw, stretched out on the plain before them, the whole force of Spanish cavalry and infantry, a contingent of Indians and negroes, and two thousand wild bulls.

At the first sight of this formidable line of battle, a quaver of alarm and dismay ran through the pirate ranks. They wished themselves well out of this hair-brained venture and safely at

home in Jamaica. However, the inevitable had to be faced, and they decided to meet it with a brave front: no quarter; victory or death. On they went, down the hill, straight into the ranks of the enemy. In advance marched Morgan's two hundred sharp-shooters, and when they came within musket-shot, they dropped on one knee and fired a terrible volley.

The ground was swampy, and the Spanish cavalry could not wheel and charge; the bulls were let loose, but, instead of dashing into the pirate ranks, they were frightened by the noise of battle, and took to their heels in a wild stampede of flight. The Spanish foot alone were left to bear the brunt of the struggle. For two hours they kept up a brave fight; at the end of that time they saw that the day was lost and, throwing down their muskets, fled in every direction.

The pirates were masters of the field. But another contest was before them at the city gates. The Spaniards let fly an incessant rain of shot; pieces of iron, musket bullets, everything they could lay their hands on, poured forth from the mouths of their guns. The pirates fell by the score. Still they persevered, and at the end of three hours the city was theirs.

The burning and sacking of Panama by Captain Morgan and his horde of barbarians was remembered for many long years. For three weeks the city was given over to plunderings and raids; the

neighboring country was ransacked ; ransoms were extorted and a fabulous booty amassed. This done, Captain Morgan collected his men and ordered a retreat to Chagres. The unhappy city was left in ashes, and the pirates went their way. The capture of Panama was a remarkable military feat, and has been looked upon with pride by some British historians. They claim for Morgan a place among the great leaders, and dignify his piracy by the name of privateering ; but if he fought under commissions, they were more than irregular.

When the pirate army reached Chagres and started on a division of the spoils, the enormous booty seemed to dwindle down to nothing. Only two hundred pieces of eight per head was the share of the common pirates. Morgan was suspected and accused of treachery and double-dealing. It was thought that he and some of the other officers had secreted the most costly jewels and the gold. Already the men had been irritated by a close personal search ; even their clothes, to the soles of their shoes, had been examined. To this insult was now added a huge swindle. They were being defrauded of their rights. Their blood had been spilled only to add to the hoard of Morgan and his officers.

Loud were the complaints among the men. They accused their leader to his face, charging him with deceit and fraud. So strong, in fact, became the opposition, especially among the



French pirates, that Morgan began to fear for his life. Secretly, in the night, he had his ship armed and victualled. He carried on board all his treasure, and then, without a word, slipped anchor in the darkness, and sped away to Jamaica as fast as his sails could carry him.

When his followers, whom he had left in the lurch, discovered his flight, they were furious. They could not follow in pursuit, for their ships were foul and unfit for sailing, and provisions were scarce. So they separated into small companies, and sought their fortunes as best they could.

Meanwhile the treacherous Morgan returned to Jamaica to enjoy his ill-gotten wealth and to ingratiate himself with the governor. This was not difficult, for Sir Thomas Modyford had been a staunch supporter of piracy throughout his rule, and was only too ready to befriend so powerful and distinguished a figure as the sea-king of the West Indies. Captain Morgan was, besides, connected in a certain way with the gubernatorial office; for his uncle, Colonel Edward Morgan, had sat in the chief executive's chair only five years before.

But rumors of the ambiguous doings in Jamaican high circles were beginning to reach the ears of the government in England; Governor Modyford was called home to give an account of his piratical sympathies, and Henry Morgan followed

him in 1672 to answer serious charges. The result of the investigation seems, however, to have satisfied the king, for, instead of being flung into lifelong disgrace, Morgan was soon raised high in the favor and confidence of his royal master.

Three years later the pirate and freebooter was knighted, and commissioned as Colonel Henry Morgan to the lieutenant-governorship of Jamaica. The king laid particular stress on Sir Henry's "long experience of that colony," and in this he was correct.

Colonel Morgan set sail, in 1674, for the scenes of his wild and lawless piracies, and spent the rest of his life in Jamaica as a man of wealth and influence. Not only was he lieutenant-governor of the colony, but also senior member of the council, commander-in-chief of the forces, and at one time acting governor. He was certainly a man of great talent!

## CHAPTER XXI

### A PAIR OF LITERARY PIRATES

It would be unjust and unappreciative to write an account of West Indian buccaneers, and not include one who is closely linked to their fame. There are very few modern inventions that were not invented long ago, to be paradoxical. For instance, the war correspondent, in whom the newspapers of the twentieth century take so much pride, existed almost four hundred years ago. The scientific traveller who ferrets out unknown lands and takes notes on the manners and morals, the fauna and flora of peculiar peoples and places; the historian who writes up a subject from personal experience, — all these were combined in the person of the great Exquemeling.

Had it not been for him, we should have known very little about the early buccaneers of the Caribbean sea. And we can rely, too, upon the accuracy of his statements, because he was there and saw it all; he was one of them. It is true that he felt obliged to resign from the society and put the ocean between himself and his former brothers before he felt secure in publishing his history.

But this has been done since. Crime and abuses have been shown up by ex-members, and true histories have been written by former accomplices.

It may even be suspected that Exquemeling turned temporary pirate for the purpose of writing a book, else why should he have taken such copious notes? Nothing so exciting or harebrained is done in that line in these days, and it would be almost a little disappointing to think that a Dutchman, more than three centuries and a half ago, had been a precursor of the modern, up-to-date investigator.

Exquemeling was in fact a true student of sociology, and he was besides a socialist, for the societies of pirates were communistic organizations. So, for all these reasons, we ought to be especially interested in him. He was a modest man, making no display of himself, and there is only one sentence in his book to show that he held any high opinion of his mental abilities. He writes that in describing the famous actions and exploits of the greatest pirates of his time he will endeavor to do so without the least note of passion or partiality, "y'ea, with that candor which is peculiar both to my mind and style," he adds with winning simplicity. He is, indeed, so ingenuous that he is captivating and delightful. His easy credibility makes him enjoy life and find it most entertaining, and we cannot help being entertained with him.

Exquemeling has written a history of the Buccaneers of America of about a hundred thousand words in length, containing the blood-curdling and marvellous exploits of the most noted pirates of his day; yet he declares that he relates nothing from hearsay, but only the experiences of which he was himself an eye-witness. From this we can judge what a battle-scarred veteran he must have been, and what a remarkable faculty he had of not getting killed. His book, first written in Dutch, made a great hit; it was the popular success of the day, and a splendid "seller." It was translated into several languages, and was reprinted in almost a dozen editions.

In 1666 John Exquemeling was in the employ of the French West India Company, and was sent out to the West Indies on business for the company. Early in May he set sail from France on the *St. John*, in company with a fleet of thirty merchant ships under convoy of a man-of-war. On the voyage he was initiated into the peculiar ceremony of "baptism" at sea, which was current among the French and Dutch mariners. The novices were hoisted three times at the main-yard's end, and dipped into the ocean, those who wished to escape the wetting being obliged to pay a fine. At every dangerous passage, and at the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, this rite was performed on every person who had never passed that way before.

After a rough and tempestuous voyage of two months, the *St. John* cast anchor in the harbor of Tortuga. Exquemeling seems to have reached Tortuga at an unfortunate time, at the lowest ebb of his company's fortunes. Early in 1600 the French colonists had possessed themselves of the island, and had become flourishing planters and traders. Their prosperity attracted the attention of the West India Company, who established a colony of their own on the island and monopolized the barter trade with the pirates, hunters, and planters. But they soon found that pirates were poor payers, and their credit could not be relied upon, and the Tortuga branch of the company was obliged to go into bankruptcy and wind up its business.

Almost immediately after Exquemeling's arrival, the company ordered the return of the factors and the sale of all the merchandise and servants belonging to them on the island. John was included in the category of servants, and was sold for about thirty dollars to the governor of the island. By ill luck, his new master turned out to be "the most cruel tyrant and perfidious man" that ever came into this world. Poor Exquemeling suffered not only "hard usages" and cruel treatment, but even hunger and starvation. His brutal master had also a sarcastic vein, for he offered John his freedom for the consideration of three hundred and seventy-five dollars. It was like offering a

pearl of great price to a beggar, for the poor slave had not a dollar in the world.

At last Exquemeling's miseries of mind and body brought on a serious illness, which so lowered his market value that the governor was glad to sell him to a surgeon for eighty dollars. His new master fortunately proved to be as kind and humane as his first owner had been cruel, and after having nursed, clothed, and fed him, he offered him his liberty on the sole condition that he would pay him a hundred and twenty dollars as soon as he had the means.

Exquemeling now found himself a very happy but a very destitute man, free to do what he liked, but lacking in "all human necessities"; not knowing how to get a living, with a debt of honor on his shoulders, and not a penny in his pocket. In this critical dilemma he determined "to enter into the wicked order of the Pirates," and was received into the society "with common consent both of the superior and vulgar sort." Thus he deliberately took up the profession of a pirate without even the excuse of a roving nature or a love of the sea. And I fancy he proved himself more successful as a student of nature and human nature than of the art of boarding and killing.

Some of Exquemeling's observations on the products of the West Indies are most original, as when he declares that to his thinking amber is really beeswax. But he gives absorbing accounts

of the wild Indian tribes on the islands, and shows himself to be a pirate with keen observation and varied interests. And his contribution to original piratic literature is one of the most important that we possess.

Another buccaneer writer, of less historic importance but of more literary finish and grace, was the dashing young Raveneau de Lussan, who kept a journal of his adventures. He was witty, vivacious, and vain, like a true Frenchman, and was in every way a strong contrast to his brother author, the serious Exquemeling.

De Lussan writes his autobiography in a perfectly candid and unaffected manner, which at once charms us and takes us into his confidence; and he tells us very frankly that he cannot account for his career excepting by the passionate love of adventure and vagabondage that was given him by nature. He came of a Parisian family of good standing and position, and his father seems to have been comfortably supplied with the world's goods. His parents were both wise and tender in their handling of him, but his wildness and wilfulness went beyond their control.

When he was scarcely seven years old, he began his escapades by frequent flights from home, and as he grew older he roamed not only over the whole of Paris but over miles of the surrounding country. To the love of a vagabond's life he united the love of arms, and this induced him to



turn soldier for a time. But at last he came to know that the sea was what he longed for. To sail through unknown waters to unknown shores, to brave mysterious perils, to see strange sights, to furrow the world with his keel, — this was his desire. No argument or prayer could turn him from his intent, and at last it was decided that he should take the voyage to the West Indies.

From the harbor of Dieppe, on the 5th of March, 1679, De Lussan set sail for San Domingo, on his first voyage of adventure, filled with a joy that was only equalled when, ten years later, he again set foot on his native shores. Now he was launching forth on a life of romance and dreams. Later he returned to a reality to which he clung like a drowning man, and so great was his fear of finding his home-coming an illusion that for fifteen days he would not allow himself to sleep, lest on awaking he should discover that his return had been only a dream.

De Lussan reminds one of a sea-gull in his fresh and graceful enthusiasm for the water, the winds, and the waves. He revels in the beauties of the sea and the freedom of the rover. There was nothing of the fierce freebooter in De Lussan; he was the gay and heedless adventurer.

His first experience was to be a rude and cruel shock, but he gives us only a glimpse of it, sparing us the ruthless details, and letting us draw our own conclusions. All we know is that for

three years he was bound to a harsh and heartless master in San Domingo, under whose hands he suffered the most cruel treatment. Knowing the customs of the time, we can picture to ourselves how at the journey's end he had spent all his money, and how he was sold into slavery, as so many others had been before him.

When he had reached the limits of endurance, he appealed to the governor, and through him obtained his release. But now, though free, he found himself bound by a debt of honor, and he was without a penny in the world. Then came what seemed to him the happy and clever inspiration to join the filibusters, as the French called the society of buccaneers. In this way he could "borrow money from the Spaniards in order to pay his debts," as he humorously expresses it.

The advantage of this method of borrowing, he goes on to say, is that there is never any question of restitution, and besides it appealed to his fondness for travelling, as he puts it. Altogether it struck him as one of the most appropriate and congenial of pursuits. His only care was to select a captain under whom he would like to serve, and this was easily done, for Laurent de Graff was on the point of starting out on an expedition and was a good sort of chap for a corsair. The governor lent our new filibuster an ample sum of money, and everything was made easy for his future career.

On the 22d of November, 1684, with sails set to the breeze, the corsair vessel, manned by a hundred and twenty French adventurers, spread out to sea; and to De Lussan the day seemed the happiest of his life.

The cruise proved uneventful, and it was not long before young Raveneau and several of his chums became dissatisfied with their captain and separated from him. Setting sail on one of the prizes, to the number of eighty-seven men, they coursed up and down the Spanish Main, capturing pinnaces, "borrowing" stores of provisions, and deciding on their future movements.

De Lussan and his companions finally concluded to try their fortunes in the mysteries of the great South Sea. They crossed overland at the narrowest strip of the Isthmus of Panama, and, after six weeks of suffering and vicissitudes, they reached the Pacific coast. There they joined a large fleet of English and French filibusters, which counted ten vessels, and eleven hundred men, and together with them plundered villages, burned towns, and led a series of expeditions that in their size resembled war more than piracy.

But this life of the filibuster was not all that the light-hearted Raveneau had pictured to himself. He had dreamed of jollity and plenty, of discoveries and exciting adventures. Instead he found himself in constant peril, enduring hardships, hunger, and fatigue, surrounded by enemies,

in danger of death, torture, and starvation. Decidedly the game was not worth the price to his mind, for he had not the true pirate's love of booty and of blood.

Had he been able, he would gladly have crossed back to the north coast before the year was out, and escaped from "those regions which are undoubtedly very charming and delightful to those who live there, but seem very different to a handful of hungry and harassed adventurers." But he was forced to continue on the career he had chosen, and his four years of adventures in the Pacific Ocean more than satisfied his desire for a vagabond's life, and also gave us a charming journal of experiences.

It seems clear, however, that a literary man, especially when he has an artistic temperament and vague aspirations, does not make a thorough-going pirate ; but as a special correspondent on buccaneering and filibustering expeditions he is a decided success.

## CHAPTER XXII

### BLACKBEARD AND BONNET

THE last of the pirate kings died with Henry Morgan; but piracy was far from being in a moribund condition, and some of the desperate sea-robbers who afterward pushed up the American coast from the Carolinas to Massachusetts were even better known in popular legend than the great chief himself.

Early in 1700 the headquarters of the freebooters had changed from Jamaica and Tortuga to the Bahama group of islands off the southern tip of Florida. This had become a more convenient base of operations nearer to the centre of trade and on the chief highway of merchant vessels; for the young colonies of Carolina and New York were drawing commerce northward from the Gulf of Mexico.

The maze of intricate channels, the thousand hidden inlets, the dangerous eddies that interlace the hundreds of little islands of the Bahamas, made a safe and unapproachable retreat for the robber gangs. Even the creeks along the southern shores of the mainland were riddled with

their nests. There they would congregate in large forces, headed by some masterful and audacious chief, who would dash out with his fast ships and make raids on passing traders.

The cargoes were carried into Charleston and other harbors along the coast, and there sold openly to the colonists. At first the rovers found ready friends and even abettors among the settlers; their freely spent money was welcomed by the merchants of the seaport towns. They were lavish scoundrels, and spent and gave with as open a hand as they took. Even the governors, who were themselves gentlemen adventurers sent out from England, sometimes took shares in pirate raids, and had an interest more than sentimental in the success of the sea forays.

At the height of this piratical craze, the famous Blackbeard entered upon the scene, and easily won the position of leading actor in melodrama and star of the troupe. He would have served very well to represent the typical pirate on the theatrical boards, and he certainly would have been a ranter. His enormous size, his big, bushy, black beard that grew up to his eyes, his reckless swagger, his fierce, savage look, and wild eyes, fill in to perfection all our childhood's pictures of the out-and-out pirate.

Fancy him stalking upon the stage as he did upon his deck, with his enormously long beard braided with gayly colored ribbons into small

tails and twisted around his ears ; a sling over his shoulder with three brace of pistols hanging in holsters ; lighted matches stuck under his hat on each side of his face ! That beard of his was likened, by old Captain Johnson, his biographer, to "a frightful meteor which covered his whole face and frightened America more than any comet that has appeared there a long time."

Then, too, it was found on a certain cruise, so rumor says, that there was a man on board more than the regular crew. He was seen sometimes below, and sometimes on deck, yet no man in the ship could give an account of who he was or whence he came. He disappeared a little while before Blackbeard's last catastrophe, and the sailors said that this man was the devil. What a picture of the story-book pirate !

The real Blackbeard was as rich in names and aliases as any modern bank robber. He was known as Edward Thatch, Teach, and Thack, but his real name was Drummond, and he came of a very respectable Bristol family, who afterward settled in Virginia. Starting life as a common mariner, he sailed before the mast on several so-called privateering expeditions, and it was on one of these voyages that he met with a well-known pirate whose headquarters were at New Providence in the Bahamas.

Hornigold, a veteran at the thieving trade and a man of wide experience in life, took a strong

liking to the bold and courageous English sailor, and persuaded him to follow the black flag. Their first cruise was in the spring of 1716, and was a lucky run. One vessel was plundered and two were captured. A large French Guineaman was their last prize, and Thatch obtained command of her.

Hornigold was old enough to have grown wise, and he now decided to return to New Providence, which had lately been swept clean with the broom of reform wielded by a new governor, and submit himself to the king. But Thatch had too recently tasted the first excitement of a free-booter's career to renounce so soon the delights and risks of a roving life. He crossed over to the North Carolina coast and established himself in a secluded inlet, known long afterward as "Thatch's Hole."

From this quiet den, dreaded by every sailor and skipper along the coast, the now notorious Blackbeard dashed out in his ship, the *Queen Anne's Revenge*, raided the towns along the seaboard, captured passing vessels, plunged southward, where he took the *Great Allan* off St. Vincent, and rounded up in the Bay of Honduras.

There he met with the distinguished and notorious Major Stede Bonnet, a man truly remarkable for his versatility and the ease with which he adapted himself to new conditions. Bonnet had spent the first half of his life in useful and emi-



nent respectability. And then, in order to make an average, and to experience a variety of sensations, he plunged to the opposite extreme and turned himself into the most desperate, daredevil sort of character. He was an artist ; he could throw himself into different situations, and whatever he undertook to do, he did well.

When Bonnet assumed his new character, he was a middle-aged man of good family, well educated, and wealthy. He had served under the king's colors with distinction and had been retired a major. His home, which it is insinuated was not a very happy one, was at Bridgetown in Barbadoes, and he was living there comfortably, if not contentedly, with his family.

Was his mind suddenly and strangely affected ? Was his wife a scold ? Or did he recall the fighting days and excitement of his youth ? No one knows. But while he calmly attended to his business and chatted with his friends, he was planning dark and wicked schemes. A sloop was secretly bought, armed with ten good guns, equipped in the most complete fashion, and provisioned for an indefinite time.

Then Bonnet looked about for an appropriate crew, and had no difficulty in finding his men, seventy rough and desperate sailors, as ready with the knife as the rope. One black night, when all was ready, the future pirate slipped noiselessly out of his house, without saying good-by to his

wife, and went aboard the sloop, newly named the *Revenge*. Anchors were weighed, sail hoisted, and the jolly sloop sped over the bar, out into the Caribbean Sea, through the Channel of Yucatan, through the Florida Straits, northward to the Capes of Virginia.

There Bonnet took his stand outside Chesapeake Bay, at the heart of the trade route. He was a good business man and knew where to strike the market. Ships sailing north and south, up and down the coast, were obliged to pass before the grand stand and doff their caps to the great Bonnet. The haughty freebooter returned the salute through the mouth of his guns. Vessel after vessel was plundered, burned, and the crews sent ashore.

When Bonnet was ready for a change of scene, he moved down to South Carolina, and anchored off the entrance to Charleston harbor. If any vessel dared to cross the bar, he was ready for her. And before long a sloop, with a brigantine close on her heels, came sailing out of harbor, straight into the hornet's nest. The little traders were quickly stung. The brigantine was looted, and then considerately sent back to port, but Bonnet took a fancy to the natty sloop and kept her for himself. Not having any use for the respectable crew of mariners, he gave them their dismissal, not at the rope's end, but ashore. Then gayly he sailed away, and with cool nonchalance

proceeded to refit his vessel on the coast of North Carolina.

So far Bonnet had shown himself to be a most exemplary pirate. He took money, but he did not take life; it was the most approved, modern, bloodless piracy. But his crew, who were a set of old-fashioned ruffians, did not appreciate him. They looked down upon him as a greenhorn and a landlubber. Just because he had never before been to sea and knew more about swords than sails, more about marching than luffing, they assumed contempt for his ignorance. All their successes were due, they fancied, to their own superior knowledge, and they began to brew schemes of revolt and mutiny.

If they had only lived in the twentieth century, they would have learned that the business faculty is the badge of success, and that a good business man makes his mark whether as a pirate or a college president. But, prejudiced as they were with their antiquated notions, they openly showed insubordination. Fortunately, Bonnet had great mental and physical courage, and he was accustomed to leading men. He kept the rebellious crew well in hand by sheer pluck and determination, and headed for the Bay of Honduras. This was how he came to meet the famous Blackbeard.

Although Bonnet was brave, he was also prudent, and he perhaps felt that for the present he had had enough of independent cruising, and would enjoy

a variety. So when Blackbeard proposed that they should enter into partnership and join fortunes, Bonnet eagerly assented. But hardly had they been a day in company than Blackbeard discovered the complete lack of seamanship of his new associate. He was himself too much of the unmitigated freebooter not to despise a gentleman pirate, and he thoroughly sympathized with the feelings of the obstreperous crew.

Bonnet was summarily deposed from the command of his own ship, and Blackbeard coolly appointed one of his own officers as captain of the *Revenge*, while the outraged and enraged major was given a safe and harmless position on the tyrant's vessel, under his vigilant eye. Much as poor, injured Bonnet fumed and fretted in his new and humiliating situation, he was forced to accept it and to take a back seat for the present.

Blackbeard was once more to the front, and hoisted sail jubilantly for the north. He was pleased with himself and with fortune, and celebrated his progress up the Atlantic coast by many prizes and captures. His little squadron, handled by so desperate a leader, was no mean force. His own ship, which mounted forty guns, was strengthened by three smaller sloops, and the combined crews numbered four hundred men.

With this strong following Blackbeard planned an audacious blockade of Charleston. Stationing his squadron outside the bar, he captured a

pilot boat, and then, as vessel after vessel attempted to sail out of harbor, he seized them, robbed the cargoes, and, when he chose, made prisoners of the men. At the end of a few days as many as nine vessels had fallen into his clutches.

One of these unfortunate boats was a passenger vessel bound for London ; and to Blackbeard's delight he found that he had captured no less distinguished a person than Samuel Wragg, a member of the Carolina Council. This was a chance for an enterprising pirate ! Mr. Wragg and his fellow-citizens were placed under close watch, and Blackbeard sent a deputation to the governor of Charleston armed with a list of demands.

Either the black pirate was a wit or he was an M.D. in disguise, for his list of requirements included every variety of medicines, bandages, drugs, and surgical instruments. If these stores were not delivered at once, Mr. Wragg and the other Charleston prisoners would be put to death. The embassy was given only two days, and at the end of that time, if nothing had arrived, the threat was to be put into execution.

Anxiously Mr. Wragg watched the entrance to the harbor for any sign of the returning boat. Two days passed and nothing came. Blackbeard notified his prisoners to prepare for death. The situation was desperate, and so was Wragg, who had no desire to die in this summary fashion.

Nature seemed to have forgotten to endow the gentleman with courage, for, overcome by fear, he so far forgot his loyalty as to offer to turn traitor. For the price of his life he proposed to pilot the pirate ships over the bar, and help to attack the undefended town.

Blackbeard was of course delighted with the suggestion, for it just suited his humor, but he did not have the chance to carry it out, for at that moment the pirate embassy hove in sight, bearing a heavy chest. The governor and council had not hesitated long in complying with the conditions. The town was unprotected, trade was tied up, eight sail were waiting in the harbor, not daring to venture out, and the incoming vessels had been frightened away. There was no alternative but to contribute to the health and life of Blackbeard and his gang.

Two thousand dollars' worth of drugs were despatched to the blockading squadron, and the only hope was that if the pirates would dose themselves in sufficient quantities, they might be killed off. Unfortunately they were immune even to drugs, and Blackbeard sailed away in high spirits after robbing and releasing his prisoners. He seems, however, to have been rather volatile in his behavior, for, after laying in stores enough to last several cruises, he suddenly decided to disband the company. But he did this in his usual arrogant way.

Sailing for North Carolina, he ran into Topsail Inlet under pretext of cleaning his ships. There he deliberately grounded two of the vessels, marooned some of the crew on a small, sandy, and barren island, reserved for himself a small sloop, and then deserted with his friends, and all the booty. As a climax he surrendered to the governor of North Carolina, obtained a pardon, and pretended to turn an honest man.

Blackbeard was now a gentleman of leisure; his fast-sailing sloop had become a yacht, and her owner amused himself with sailing in the quiet waters of Albermarle and Pamlico sounds. He had a turn for society, too, and ingratiated himself with many of the leading families, including Governor Eden and Secretary Tobias Knight. His intimacy, in fact, with these two men grew to be of a business as well as a social nature, and was more notorious than honest.

Whether from fear, curiosity, or sympathy, some of the most prominent houses opened their doors to the former pirate, and Blackbeard boasted that he could invite himself to dinner with any of the chief members of the colony. But this was a libel on the settlers, for several of the old families refused to receive him, and once at least he was firmly rebuffed.

Colonel Swann owned an estate bordering the harbor, and had a private landing with steps that ran down to the water's edge. Some distance be-

yond, Blackbeard's yacht rode at anchor, and one morning the colonel received word that the pirate would dine with him that day and would arrive at noon. A few minutes before the hour the would-be guest stepped into his boat, and twelve lusty sailors pulled for the landing. Blackbeard had a good appetite and was looking forward to the dinner; and there stood Colonel Swann at the top of the steps ready to receive him.

But as the boat approached, the colonel raised his rifle and threatened to shoot the uninvited guest through the heart if he came a stroke nearer. As Blackbeard was on his way to a dinner party, he was unarmed, and was taken decidedly at a disadvantage. There was no alternative but retreat, and with a very bad grace he retired to his ship.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### THEY GO DIFFERENT WAYS TO THE SAME END

BLACKBEARD had never intended to pass the rest of his days in virtuous inaction. His stay in North Carolina had been nothing more than a subterfuge to gain accomplices and a convenient storehouse. By the summer of 1718 he fitted his yacht for a cruise, and sailed out of the harbor of Bath on what was to him a pleasure trip. Steering eastward toward the Bermudas, he ran across several English vessels, which he plundered of stores and provisions, and then captured two French traders. One of these was laden with a good cargo of cotton, cocoa, and sugar, and, turning the crew into the second vessel, which had an empty hold, Blackbeard brought his prize into a cove not far from Bath.

Secretly, in the night, the barrels and bags were hurried over to Mr. Knight's farm and hidden in his barn, under piles of hay and fodder. Blackbeard reported to the governor that he had fallen in with a deserted French ship, which he had found in mid-seas without a soul on board. A court was called, and the ship condemned as a

lawful prize. Governor Eden received for his share of the booty sixty hogsheads of sugar, and Mr. Knight twenty.

This little affair of plunder and bribery brought with it a heavy price, and was the undoing of Blackbeard. His success made him insolent. He ravaged the coast north and south, he picked up traders, pillaged the coasters, and finally aroused the indignation of every planter and merchant along the coast. There was no use in looking to the authorities for help, as they coöperated with the pirate; the traders, therefore, sent a secret appeal to the governor of Virginia.

Governor Spotswood acted promptly but quietly. So general was the sympathy with piracy that he did not even trust his own council, and kept his plans secret. He bought two sloops, equipped and armed them, and manned them with crews taken from two British frigates that happened to be lying in Chesapeake Bay. Lieutenant Maynard, of the frigate *Pearl*, was placed in command of the expedition. The choice of the leader had been fortunate. Maynard was a man of resolution, gallantry, and daring. He set sail from James River with orders to bring Blackbeard to Virginia, dead or alive.

The pirate was trapped in Ocracoke Inlet. He had been warned by his friends of the coming attack, but had chosen not to believe the reports. When the sloops appeared off the mouth of the

inlet he was caught unprepared, with no chance of escape. There was a party tracking him by land, and a reward of five hundred dollars had been offered for his arrest. He had no alternative but to prepare for the conflict, and it did not take long to clear his vessel for action. In a way he had an advantage, for his sloop mounted eight guns, and he had threaded every turn of the intricate channel, while his opponent had only small arms, and was unfamiliar with the shoals and sandbanks.

Maynard had anchored outside the entrance for the night. At early dawn he weighed and entered the inlet with caution. A boat went ahead sounding. But for all his care his sloop grounded several times before he succeeded in coming within gunshot. As Maynard approached, Blackbeard trained his eight guns on the advancing vessel and sent a rattling broadside through her, and at the same time cut his cables.

A lively running fight followed. The British sloop had nothing but small arms to return the hot fire of the pirate guns, but they were kept going at a brisk pace. It was not long before Blackbeard's ship ran aground and stuck fast. Maynard ordered all his ballast to be thrown overboard, the water barrels staved, and the sloop lightened in every way, so that he could come within reach of the pirate and board her. But Blackbeard was ready with double-shotted guns

to receive his opponent. A terrific broadside disabled one of the British sloops, and killed or wounded twenty-nine men.

This was a serious blow. Maynard's sloop alone was fit for action, and he prepared for a desperate struggle. He ordered his decks cleared, and his men to go below, ready with sword and pistol in hand to leap up the hatchway at the first word of command. The heroic lieutenant alone kept the deck, with the man at the helm, and even the helmsman was told to lie snug. As the sloop advanced bows on, the erect and gallant figure of Maynard was the only one to be seen on board.

Blackbeard had prepared for a desperate end. Rather than be captured he preferred to blow up his vessel and all on board, and he had stationed one of his gang close to the powder magazine ready with lighted match to send them to destruction. But as the British bows struck his quarter he was deceived by the sight of empty decks, and Maynard holding the solitary ship. Throwing hand grenades which burst and enveloped the sloop in a dense smoke, Blackbeard and fourteen men boarded with a rush, and flung themselves upon Maynard.

At a word from their lieutenant the British crew leaped on deck and rushed headlong on the pirates. There were only eleven against fourteen, but they fought with desperation. Blackbeard and Maynard had emptied their pistols into each

other, and were in a fierce hand-to-hand struggle, when the lieutenant's sword broke. On the instant, taking advantage of this accident, the pirate stepped back to cock his pistol and fire it point-blank into Maynard's breast. Just then a sword-cut from one of the British sailors dealt Blackbeard a mortal wound in the neck, and he fell to the deck; but so desperately had he fought that he had received twenty-five wounds before this final death thrust.

Eight of the pirate crew had already fallen. The rest jumped overboard; while those that still remained on the corsair craft called for quarter. Maynard sailed into the harbor of Bath with Blackbeard's head hung at the bowsprit.

Meanwhile Bonnet had been pursuing an independent and equally lawless career. When Blackbeard disbanded his gang at Topsail Inlet, the much injured major recovered his ship, the *Revenge*, sailed to Bath, and, with as much cunning as his overbearing associate had shown, he surrendered to the king. This was merely to get a clearance for his sloop to sail to the island of St. Thomas, under pretext of applying for a commission as privateer.

Hardly had he cleared the harbor than he headed again for Topsail Inlet, picked up the crew whom Blackbeard had marooned, and sailed southward in search of prey. And now, so as the more effectually to cover his traces and leave his former

life behind him, he changed his name to Captain Thomas.

With his old name the major cast off all restraining memories, and went a-pirating in good earnest. He patrolled the coast, and every vessel he met was taken and plundered. Ship after ship was held up, trade was interrupted, merchants were in despair. As Bonnet sailed up and down the coast, his hold gradually accumulated stores of sugar, cotton, indigo, rum, molasses, money, and merchandise. In one month as many as a dozen vessels of all kinds — pinks, snows, sloops, schooners, and other merchantmen — fell into his hands.

By this time the *Revenge*, or the *Royal James*, as she was now called, needed to be cleaned and repaired, and Bonnet retired to one of his haunts in the Cape Fear River. There he lingered for almost two months, careening and patching up his leaky sloop.

While he was comfortably established in his lair, the exciting news leaked out that a pirate was lurking among Carolina coves, and it quickly spread as far as Charleston. The people were indignant; the government was roused. A daring and energetic gentleman of fortune, Colonel Rhett, was eager to lead an expedition against the marauders, and was given a commission by the governor. Two sloops were fitted out, each mounting eight guns, and manned by a crew of sixty to seventy men.

As twilight began to fall, on the evening of the 26th of September, 1718, two jaunty South Carolina sail hove suddenly in sight at the mouth of the Cape Fear River. Colonel Rhett had brought his sloops round in fine style, and stood in for the abrupt headland that rose at the entrance, outside the bar. Over a point of land up-stream he sighted the topmasts of the pirate's vessel and his prizes as they lay at anchor in a curve of the river.

Bonnet was vigilant, and had posted a watch at some distance down-stream. When the strange sail crossed the bar, the alarm had already been given, and three armed canoes were on their way to reconnoitre. They hurried back to confirm the unwelcome news. Bonnet knew that the morning would bring a desperate struggle, and all night he prepared for the attack. Decks were cleared, men were taken out of the prizes and concentrated on the sloop, guns were made ready. It was a scene of feverish activity; not a moment's sleep did the crew get that night.

Meanwhile Colonel Rhett had not been having an easy time, and the South Carolinians had passed a wakeful and anxious night. Hardly had the two sloops crossed the bar than they both ran aground on a hidden sand-bank. It was early morning before the efforts of the crews could get the vessels into deep water. And just as Rhett was well under way, the pirate craft came sailing

down the river, every sail set, and flying before the breeze.

A running fight was what Bonnet was trying for. He knew there would be no chance for him if he stayed cooped up in his anchorage, and a run for the open was his best hope. So down he swept full speed. But Rhett was a match for him. He stationed his sloops, one on each quarter, ready to board, and crowded the pirate inshore. Rhett knew nothing of the river, of its shoals and sandbars, but he trusted to fortune.

It so chanced that his move not only drove the pirate craft fast aground, but sent his own sloops into the shoal water, where they struck bottom and were caught in the sandy bank. There they were, all three, held firm and tight, without the possibility of getting afloat until the tide should rise, and that would not be for five hours.

As they lay, the advantage was with the pirates. Their boat had careened in such a fashion that she showed her hull to her opponent, while Rhett's flagship, the *Henry*, had also careened in the same direction, and her bare decks faced the enemy within pistol shot. Meanwhile, the *Sea Nymph* had grounded entirely out of range, and took no part in the fight.

Bonnet was confident of victory, and the pirates waved their caps in derision, as their raking fire swept the uncovered decks of the *Henry*. It was death to serve the guns on the Carolinian flag-ship,



but not a man flinched. The pirates had turned their backs, as it were, on the enemy, but the brave Carolinians resolutely faced the fire.

For five hours the deadly broadsides, and the quick-firing small arms did their work. The *Henry* battered away at the round hull of her adversary, while the *Royal James* answered with a murderous fire that raked the Carolinian deck from prow to stern.

"The issue of the battle now depended on the tide ; victory would be with the party whose vessel was first afloat. For five hours the flood poured up the river, and it was late in the day before it was high enough to lift the sloops from their stranded positions." With growing excitement and anxiety the pirates watched the rising waters. Would they be the first to right themselves ? No, their ship still stuck fast ; no motion cheered them, they were riveted to the bottom.

But slowly, slowly, the *Henry* rose to an upright position ; the waters lifted her as they swirled around her sides, and she floated off on the flood. Despair filled the pirates. They clamored to surrender. But Bonnet would not hear of it ; he would fire the magazine and send them all to the bottom rather than give in. During the altercation the *Henry's* rigging had been repaired and she now came bearing down on her demoralized adversary.

In spite of Bonnet's firm stand, the pirates preferred to try the chances of a pardon, and as Rhett advanced he was met by a flag of truce. The gang surrendered unconditionally, and the victorious Carolinians sailed back to Charleston with thirty pirate prisoners. Not until Rhett had taken possession of the *Royal James* did he know that the freebooter chief whom he had trapped was none other than the famous Bonnet, the terror of the coast.

But Bonnet's adventures were not yet at an end. Together with his crew, he was held in custody pending a trial. As Charleston had no prison, the common marauders were shut up in the watch-house, while Bonnet, with his sailing master and boatswain, were placed in the marshal's house under a close guard. The sentinels, however, proved corruptible to pirate gold; Bonnet had many friends in the city, and so well did they use their influence and their money, that the guard were induced to fall asleep.

One dark night, Bonnet, disguised in woman's clothes, and Heriot, his sailing master, escaped from the marshal's house, made their way to the harbor, where a boat was awaiting them, and sped along the coast northward. Great was the commotion and consternation in Charleston the next morning when the flight was discovered. Boats were sent hurrying up and down the coast, every cove was ransacked, the woods beaten to find the

fugitives. A reward of thirty-five hundred dollars had been set on their heads, and many were eager to win it.

The winds and waves had been buffeting and beating Bonnet's boat, and the pirates were having a very miserable time, while the province was out on their tracks. They had no provisions, and hunger and exposure finally drove them back to Sullivan's Island, only a few miles from Charleston. There they concealed themselves in the low myrtle forests and hoped to escape discovery. But reports of their hiding-place were sent to the governor, who immediately commissioned Rhett to pursue and capture the fugitives.

With a strong detachment of men, under cover of the night, Rhett sailed across to Sullivan's Island, tracked the pirates to their lurking-place, and fired upon them. Heriot was killed, and Bonnet surrendered.

This time he was carefully guarded, and brought to his trial before a distinguished court, made up of some of the most eminent men in the province. Already his gang had been tried, found guilty, and executed. When Bonnet heard the fate of his crew, he lost all hope for himself, and was not surprised at the sentence of death that was passed upon him.

Throughout his trial he had shown firmness and courage. But when the hour drew near for his

execution, he turned hypocrite and coward, and wrote an abject letter of appeal to the governor. This did not save him, and he met his fate on the 10th of December, 1718, little more than two weeks after the death of Blackbeard.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE PIRATE PARAMOUNT

HE was less of a pirate than any who had gone before or who came after him, and yet he is the pirate paramount of modern times. And if any American boy were asked to name one name that would represent the whole type and breed, clan and class of sea-robbers, the answer would be: Captain Kidd.

Year after year he has been voted the most popular pirate of the profession; and, in point of wide and stirring notoriety, he certainly has had no rival. Yet this fame was due largely to his fate, and both fame and fate were to some extent undeserved.

But, after all, the question of popularity depends not so much upon whether a man is a good or a bad thief, as upon whether his life or his personality has something fascinating in it. And Captain Kidd's career had a great deal to excite interest and curiosity. Above all, his actions were mysterious, and there is nothing so sure to charm the popular fancy as mystery. It leaves so much to our own powers of invention and to the wildest flights of possibility or impossibility.

The result was that Captain Kidd became a very mythical sort of person. Every one who had the gift of telling a story added to the list of remarkable experiences of our national pirate, until he became a fairy prince and the hero of ballads and romances innumerable. Finally it was thought necessary to reëstablish the character and reputation of the real Captain Kidd, and our delightful illusions have been sternly destroyed.

But, just the same, we refuse to give up our belief in buried treasure, and we would all go and dig for it if we could ; in fact we are digging for it in one way or another all the time.

William Kidd was a Scotchman of stanch descent. His father was a Nonconformist clergyman ; and so strong and unflinching was his belief that he suffered torture by the boot, in those days of religious fanaticism, rather than renounce his faith. William inherited his father's respectability and a certain traditional propriety which made the making of a pirate long and gradual ; but he did not inherit his father's steadfastness.

When he was still a boy, William went to sea, and showed so much skill, courage, and energy as a sailor that he soon rose to be a merchant captain. His voyages carried him to almost every part of the globe — to America, Africa, and Asia, into the Atlantic, the Caribbean Sea, and the Indian Ocean. He was not exclusive in his choice of customers

or of acquaintances; he traded with all, and was friends alike with merchants and with pirates.

In this way he became familiar with all the lairs and lurking-places of the robbers. His swift, sprightly little vessel could run into all waters, deep or shallow, and there were certain English captains of uncertain reputation and mysterious habits to whom he sold merchandise of different kinds, and with whom he was on terms of good fellowship. He always had a knack of making friends, but sometimes his friends turned against him.

After a wide experience as a sailing-master, Kidd settled in New York, and in 1691 married a widow. He owned a comfortable house, and had amassed a very good little fortune, but still kept up his business of trading. So well known had he become for his skill and energy, that he had been given a commission as privateer, when war broke out between England and France, and he did some good service by several daring captures of French merchantmen.

In fact his success in harassing the enemy's commerce in the West Indies and along the Atlantic coast won for him a reward of seven hundred and fifty dollars from the New York General Assembly. This was Kidd's first taste of the exciting pursuit of acquiring property through the mouth of cannon, but he was soon to have another chance.

King William III of England had become greatly incensed against piracy. Many complaints had come to him from his subjects in the American Colonies. And not only was English commerce harassed, and English ships captured in the Atlantic waters, but even in the Indian Ocean traders were plundered and whole cargoes stolen. The depredations of the pirates had become a serious menace to commerce, and King William was determined to fight them.

A new governor of New York had just been appointed and was on the eve of sailing for America. Captain Kidd happened to be in London at the time, and a friend or patron of his, one of the New York Livingstons, was also there. And it was by this combination of chances that Captain Kidd came to the king's notice and later to Execution Dock.

Mr. Livingston recommended Kidd to the new governor, Lord Bellomont, and he in turn spoke of him to King William as the very man to lead a cruise against pirates. He was daring, resolute, and a practised seaman, familiar with the seas far and near; and Bellomont was confident that with one smart galley he could sweep the thieves from off the waters, although Kidd himself was rather loth to accept the task.

The king approved of the scheme, and was willing to share in the profits, but prudently declined to contribute to the expedition or to make



it an official enterprise. The affair was therefore kept in private hands ; a subscription was started, and several of the great English lords contributed large sums. A patronage so distinguished was flattering to the vanity of a more or less obscure sea-captain, but it was undoubtedly his connection with the king and his eminent backing that gave him the notoriety of a state trial and brought him to the rope's end. If Captain Kidd had not been arrested, tried, and hung, if he had not been sacrificed to the reputation of high chancellors, high admirals, and governors, he might never have been the popular pirate of modern times. Would he consider this a compensation ?

A small, swift galley was bought and equipped at a cost of thirty thousand dollars. To our minds a cruise against pirates seems a wild kind of speculation, but the stockholders evidently thought it would be a paying investment, and expected to realize a large percentage of interest. Forty shares from the booty were to be set aside for the subscribers, ten of these going to the king. The rest was to be divided among the crew.

The galley *Adventure* was armed with thirty guns and carried eighty men when she set sail from Plymouth harbor, late in April or early in May, 1696. Kidd started on his cruise, provided with two commissions. One was the regular commission of reprisals against French ships, the two countries being then at war ; the other was

an unusual document authorizing him to capture pirates, to bring the outlaws to justice, and to take possession of their property for the benefit of the owners and crew of the *Adventure*.

Kidd sailed into New York harbor in July, bringing with him a French prize that he had captured in mid-seas. His first care was to increase the *Adventure's* crew, for she had not yet her full complement, and he easily lured men to take service by offering shares in the pirate plunder. By September he had collected a hundred and fifty rough, reckless mariners, and was ready to take the sea.

Kidd showed his independent spirit at once. Instead of hanging around the American coast and picking up straggling pirates who happened to be looking for prey, he shaped his course straight across the Atlantic and headed for Madagascar, the headquarters and rendezvous of piracy. He believed in carrying hostilities into the enemy's waters, and in this was very modern in the science of naval warfare.

As yet he had not run up the black flag. He still honestly intended to carry out his commission. On the way he touched at several ports to lay in stores: at Madeira for wine, at Bonavista, one of the Cape Verde Islands, for salt, at Santiago for provisions. Then he swept around the Cape of Good Hope, and rounded up at Madagascar, the very nest and centre of the pirate swarm.

On the island of Madagascar the great marauder-chiefs had established a regular robber rule. They had seized a large part of the island, had built forts and citadels, and had surrounded their houses with high ramparts and deep ditches. Completely hidden among the dense labyrinths of the tropical forests, and the maze of thorns and prickly plants, they were as safe as wild beasts in their jungles. In this secure retreat they lived like independent princes, in wealth and luxury. Here they returned from their long and world-wide raids, bringing back the riches of the East and West to their forest palaces.

It so happened that Kidd found nothing to reward his daring. The pirates were all away from their lair. They were off on cruises, in search of plunder, and the creeks were deserted. For several months the *Adventure* hung around the coast, but not a sail hove in sight; only the even, endless plain of water stretched before them. The crew were growing discontented; for they had come thirsting for a fight and for booty; months had already passed, in fact it was a year since they had left England, and they were poorer than when they started.

The galley had been watered and victualled at Madagascar, but provisions soon ran low again, and, added to this, the vessel needed repairs. Kidd sailed to Malabar, but still the sea was empty. Then in despair he put in at Joanna, and there

came his first stroke of luck. The wreck of a French ship lay in a mangled heap on the rocks of the island shores. The crew had escaped, the cargo was a total loss; but Kidd found a pile of doubloons which he "loaned," as he expressed it, and these helped him for a time.

But the small store of provisions that the doubloons had bought lasted for only a short time, and, goaded by starvation, Kidd sent armed boats ashore with a party of reckless men to steal food from the natives at the muzzle of their pistols. To this desperate point had he been driven. He was, in fact, growing hopeless. A storm was brewing among the crew—mutterings and mutiny: they had been lured to the end of the vast ocean by promises of wealth, and they were starving, without a grain of food or a penny of money.

Captain Kidd was no less discontented than his men. Failure was staring him in the face. Not only had he put large sums of his own in the venture, but his patrons would hold him responsible for their outlay. To return empty-handed meant ruin, complete ruin and disgrace. In his way of thinking nothing was pardoned to failure, but everything was forgiven to success.

His resolution was taken. There was but one way to make the speculation pay. He called his crew and said to them: "We have been unsuccessful hitherto, but courage, my boys, we'll make our

fortune out of the Mocha fleet. Away we go for the Red Sea ! ”

Sails were hoisted, and the reckless little galley sped madly through the water as she raced for Bab's Key. Now that the first step was taken, Kidd was eager for the dangerous and forbidden fruit of gold. Did not his commission read, “ We command you at your peril that you do not molest our friends or allies under any pretence,” and was not this Mocha fleet made up, not only of ships belonging to the Dutch, their allies, and to the Great Mogul, their friend, but of English vessels as well ?

Behind Bab's Key, sheltered by the headlands, lay in hiding the rakish ship of the desperadoes. Their lookouts could watch the narrow entrance to the Red Sea, only fifteen miles across. Through these straits the great Mocha fleet was soon to pass, laden with coffee, spices, and myrrh, with gold, ivory, and hard doubloons.

Two days they waited, but the fleet had not come, and Kidd grew impatient. He sent an armed boat to reconnoitre, and the news came back that the vessels were on the point of weighing anchor. There were fifteen galleons, Dutch, Moorish, and English, convoyed by two men-of-war: Dutch and English. The report did not alarm Kidd; he was keen for the fight.

On they came, straggling through the channel, these slow, heavily laden merchant ships. Un-

conscious of danger, they were scattered here and there in disorderly fashion. Close to the treacherous headland lumbered an awkward galleon. With a plunge, the *Adventure* was out upon her in full chase, letting fly a brisk round of shot. But the man-of-war was prompt to defend her charge. Bearing down on the little craft she trained her big guns with good effect, and the *Adventure* veered off. She was light of wing and could fly with ease.

## CHAPTER XXV

### A PIRATE IN THE MAKING

HIS first step had not been a success, but it sealed his fate. Captain Kidd had passed out of the door of the fraternity of privateers, and had stepped upon the threshold of the society of pirates. For a long time he tried to keep a foothold within each, and every now and then would turn back to hold ajar the door that was behind him. He was the kind of villain who wanted to do wrong under cover of the right, to have both profits and respectability, to stand in two camps at the same time.

His traditional conscience, too, was pulling him back, while his cupidity dragged him forward. Poor Kidd had a hard struggle to accept infamy as well as gold ; in fact, to the last he never consented to admit that he was a pirate. And his career had singular lapses of repentance and strange attacks of subterfuge.

Kidd veered off from the Mocha fleet fully determined to succeed elsewhere. He was desperate, and in his present mood would not stop at anything. Heading for Malabar, he cruised off the

coast and captured a small Moorish vessel, whose captain, Parker, was an Englishman. For it frequently happened that the native merchants employed foreign seamen, both Dutch and English, to command their vessels, having greater confidence in their ability.

There was small booty on the Aden boat,—only a bale of pepper and one of coffee. But Kidd also found on her a quantity of myrrh which he used instead of pitch for caulking the worn-out *Adventure*—both poetic and ingenious. But the sweet-smelling myrrh failed to soften his feelings, now wrought up to a pitch of frenzy. He suspected there was gold hidden somewhere on the ship, and with reckless ferocity he ordered the Moorish crew to be hung up in the rigging and beaten with the flats of cutlasses to force them to confession.

Parker, the captain, and a Portuguese passenger had been made prisoners and concealed in the hold of the *Adventure*, but the fact got abroad, after touching at a port on the Malabar coast, and a Portuguese man-of-war trained her big guns on the pirate. Kidd was stubborn and in the humor for a fight. He might have spread his sails and escaped, but chose rather to close with his antagonist in a vigorous six hours' contest. Then, finding the war-ship too strong for him, he hauled off to the open sea.

Ten of his men were wounded, and the *Adventure*



needed repairs, but when a Moorish sail hove in sight Kidd was ready to give chase. Hoisting French colors, he dashed in pursuit. Soon an answering French flag was run up on the fugitive, and when Kidd hailed her and ordered a boat to be sent aboard, she meekly obeyed. The captain, who was a Dutchman, and a French passenger named Le Roy, went in answer to the summons, and when the captain displayed a French pass, Kidd in vehement language declared the ship to be a lawful prize. He plundered the cargo, which belonged to Moorish merchants, and carried the vessel to Madagascar.

The pirate crew had tasted booty, and the first taste merely whetted their appetite for more. For them there were no favored nations; all alike must be their victims. Their captain, however, had not gone to such lengths, and on meeting an English ship in mid-seas, he exchanged visits with her commander and then let him go peacefully on his way. This enraged the crew; they were sullen and menacing. Their stores were running low, and they had had but their caviare.

The spirit of discontent grew, until one day William Moore, a gunner, made open complaint to Captain Kidd. The altercation between the two became vehement, and in a fit of violent temper Kidd seized a bucket that was standing on deck and struck the man on the head with it.

The bucket was bound with iron, and Kidd was powerful of arm ; the blow made a severe wound, and the gunner died of it the next day. This unintentional murder, which was one of the main charges against Kidd at his trial, was what carried him to Execution Dock, for the charge of piracy was never proved.

In the old and "lamentable" ballad on Captain Kidd, he is made to say :

"I murdered William Moore,  
And left him in his gore,  
Not many leagues from shore,  
As I sailed."

After this Captain Kidd had few returns to penitence, and became more of the unscrupulous sea-robber. He touched on the coast of Malabar for wood and water, and when one of the party that was sent ashore was attacked and killed by the natives, Kidd landed in force, plundered and burned the houses, and shot one of the savages.

Coasting along Malabar, he met a Moorish ketch, captured her and stole her cargo of sugar, tobacco, coffee, and myrrh.

"I steer'd from sound to sound,  
And many ships I found,  
And most of them I burn'd,  
As I sailed."

Next came a Portuguese ship from Bengal; out of her he took jars of butter, chests of opium, wax, iron, bags of rice, and rich East India goods.

This was a fair haul; the new year of 1698 promised well, and January was not out before the promise was fulfilled.

A sail loomed large upon the horizon out on the high seas, a rich quarry for the ravenous wolf. The heavy merchant ship was alone; not another speck could be seen on the wide, lonely stretch of water. There was no help for her; she was too laggard of heel to escape, and the agile pirate craft was upon her. The chase was short; with scarcely a struggle she lay in the water-wolf's clutch. Here was the prize of the long, dreary quest; the reward of hunger, and solitary search, and danger. The pirates did not think of the gallows; they thought of nothing but the gold.

What a rich booty! Worth three hundred and twenty thousand dollars, and the ship besides! There were bales and bags packed away in the hold: two hundred and fifty bags of sugar, twenty bales of silk, seventy chests of opium, three hundred bales of calicoes and muslins. All this belonged to wealthy Armenian merchants, many of whom were on board. There were also a number of Indians among the crew, while the only Europeans were two Dutchmen, one Frenchman, and Wright, the English captain of the ship. Over all flew the flag of the Great Mogul.

This was the famous *Quedagh Merchant*—the ship of the buried treasure, the ship that was after-

ward chased up the Hudson River, so tradition says, and was sunk in the night near the Highlands, the ship that was seen lying deep under water filled with bars of yellow gold, with sparkling diamonds piled in loose heaps, and with stacks of silver coins.

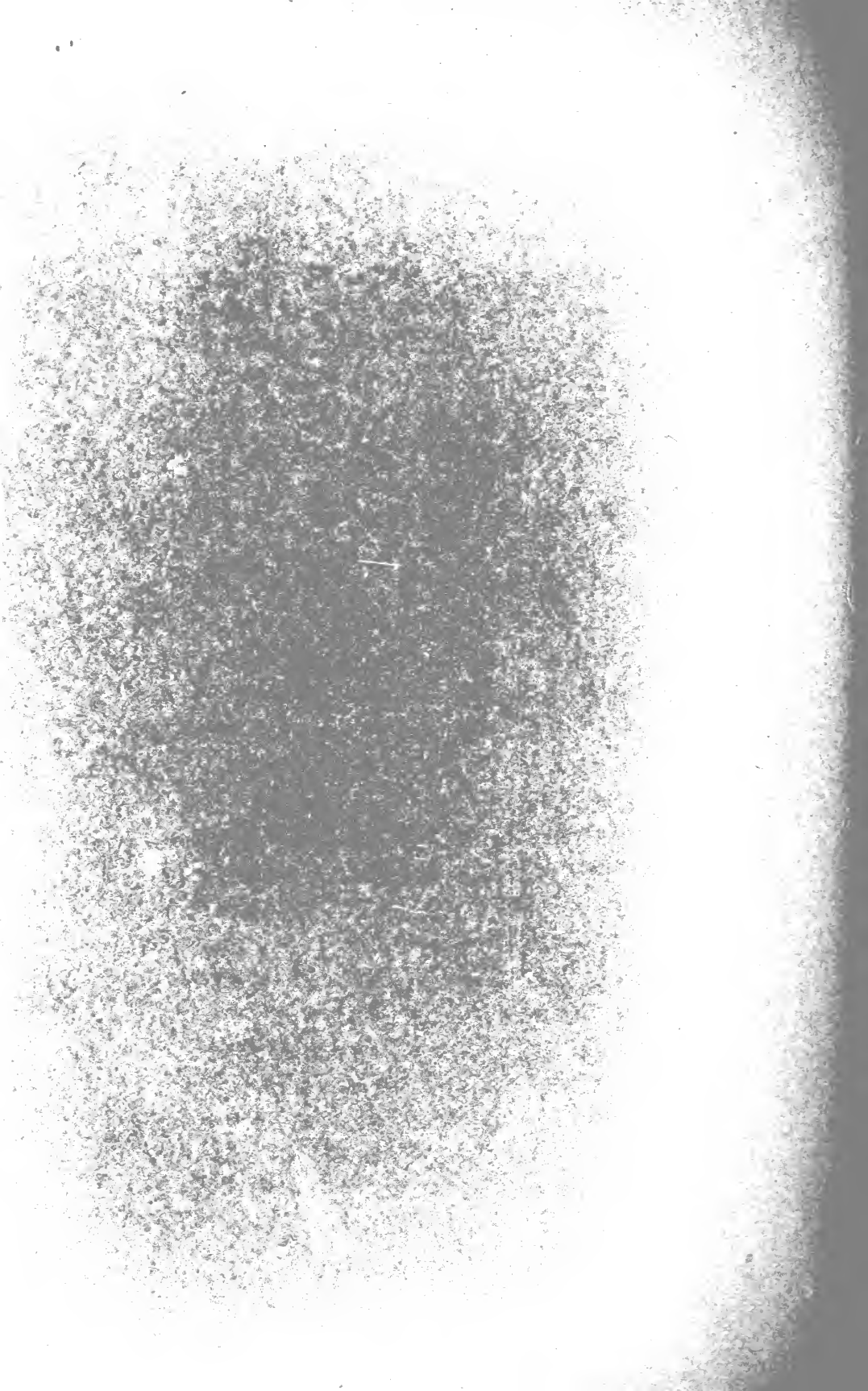
When the unfortunate Armenian merchants found that they, and all they possessed, had fallen into the hands of a villanous pirate crew, they were in despair. So rich a cargo was worth an effort to save, and they went in a body to Captain Kidd, begging him on their knees to accept a ransom of twenty thousand rupees, or about fifteen thousand dollars. But Kidd considered this a bad business speculation and refused the offer. He counted on far larger profits by the sale of the merchandise, and, besides, his seaman's eye coveted the fine, well-built ship for his own. The *Adventure* was fast growing unseaworthy, and here was a chance to leave behind his leaky little boat, and transfer his flag to a gallant craft.

The unhappy merchants and crew were sent ashore by degrees in large boat-loads. All along the island coasts they were scattered and left to their own devices. The *Quedagh Merchant* was manned with Kidd's own sailors and gayly did they hoist sail for Madagascar.

Touching at different ports along the way, Captain Kidd sold large portions of the cargo, and in a few days realized ten thousand dollars. Then



Eagerly the men gathered on deck and crowded around the rich and glittering hoard



came the division of the booty, of the money and merchandise. Eagerly the men gathered on deck and crowded around the rich and glittering hoard : gold, silver, jewels, silks, which, even when divided among a hundred and fifty men, gave a good dividend. Kidd's share amounted to eighty thousand dollars, and the men received two thousand dollars each.

“ I'd ninety bars of gold,  
And dollars manifold,  
With riches uncontroll'd,  
As I sailed.”

Provisions had been bought, also, from the native Indians, or taken, as the case might be. Kidd had a way of trading fairly when he first arrived at a place, but on the eve of sailing he would take freely of what he wanted and send the natives ashore without a penny in return. This treatment surprised them, writes the quaint old chronicler, Captain Johnson, for “ they had been used to deal with pirates, and always found them men of honor, in the way of trade ; a people, enemies to deceit, and that scorned to rob but in their own way.” They were not accustomed to a double-faced thief like the captain.

Madagascar was soon sighted, and Kidd's first care was to shift his guns and tackle from the old *Adventure*, run up the black flag on the masthead of the *Quedagh Merchant*, take on his stores, treasure, and men, and set a match to the

despised little galley. The new, fully made pirate was commander of a man-of-war. It was a proud moment when he cast anchor in the chief harbor of Madagascar, and the imposing size of the transformed merchantman impressed others besides her corsair commander.

Not far from Kidd's anchorage lay another pirate ship, the *Resolution*. Her captain, Culliford, had heard of Captain Kidd, of his high patronage, and his mission to sweep the robbers from the sea. Alarm spread through the *Resolution*; they were to be captured, then, in their lair, and carried to England to be tried and executed. Their lives hung in the balance, as they would perhaps hang later on the dock. Culliford determined to know his fate at once, and, manning a boat, he rowed over to the unwelcome arrival.

Great was the surprise and joy of Culliford and his officers to find that the captor of pirates had himself turned pirate. Kidd received his brothers with open arms, and assured them of his sympathy and comradeship. They not only exchanged visits and presents, but drank each other's health in a glass of "bomboe." This East India drink was made of water, lime juice, sugar, and a dash of rum, and is spoken of with warm appreciation by an English writer, who professes to admire a man that calks his ship with myrrh and drinks bomboe. It is true Kidd's tastes were more æsthetic than those of the common run of water-thieves.



Many of the pirate crew of the old *Adventure*, who had been afloat for eighteen months in search of their fortunes, thought they would make sure of the luck that had come to them, and would retire before it was too late. They meant to risk nothing to chance. A large number, therefore, left the *Quedagh Merchant* and went ashore at Madagascar, crossing over afterward, as passengers, to New England. But, after all, they gained nothing by their desertion, for they were arrested and sent to England, where several suffered the fate of their leader.

It was soon after this that Captain Kidd heard the first alarming news. He had spread sail for another cruise, and was touching at one of the Dutch Spice Islands, when he was told that he had been declared a pirate. Rumors of his extraordinary actions had reached England. Merchants were aroused; a motion of inquiry had been made in Parliament as to his commission, and those who had sent him out; lords were implicated; the king even was concerned, and his commission had been misused. The almost unknown sailor, who for a year and a half had been out on a piratical cruise in distant seas, was already a notorious character.

The king had decided that rather than exterminate pirates, he would pardon them, a far simpler and safer method. A proclamation was issued to that effect, but an exception was made of Kidd,

who, instead of being pardoned, was pursued by a fast English sloop with orders for his arrest.

Captain Kidd did not yet know the worst; he did not know that he had been singled out for special retribution, but he had heard enough to show that his return would be unsafe. However, with his usual self-reliance, he flattered himself that his peculiar doings would be overlooked. He also counted on the influence of his high patrons, little thinking that he was to be made their scapegoat.

And thus, with overweening confidence, he deliberately put his head into the noose, and set sail for the West Indies. It was a long stretch across the desolate ocean; gales blew fiercely, and storms broke over the solitary ship. But at last she sighted the northernmost of the Caribbee group, and dropped anchor in the little harbor of Snake Island. Kidd's advance from this point was wary, for he now learned that a British man-of-war, the *Queensborough*, was out upon his tracks. And, although he still relied on the influence of his friends the lords, and on a few French passes that he had found on the captured vessels, he wanted to arrive upon the scene with as little damaging evidence as possible.

Now, the most serious proof of his irregular proceedings was the great East India merchantman, transformed into Captain Kidd's man-of-war, whose character could by no device be disguised.

There she was, formidable, well armed, with an enormous booty packed away in her hold. No subterfuge could explain her presence in New York harbor, and it was clear that the *Quedagh Merchant* must be sacrificed.

Laying his plans with care and cunning, Kidd slipped southward to Curaçoa, off the coast of Venezuela, to take in supplies and make his final arrangements. There he ran in with a fast sloop from Philadelphia, the *Antonio*, which had touched at the island for trade. She was the very craft for his purpose, and with small delay he bought her, and set his men to transferring all the portable treasures from the hold of the *Quedagh Merchant* to the hold of the *Antonio*.

The jewels were tumbled into stout canvas bags, all the gold and silver was carried off in chests, and a few bales of merchandise were also added. But the heavy booty must be left behind in the larger ship, and she was still a rich prize, even after the most valuable part of the plunder had been slipped into the sloop. Her cargo was no mean one, for it included a hundred and fifty bales of the finest silks, eighty tons of sugar, forty tons of saltpetre, besides large quantities of iron, anchors, stores of ammunition, and fifty guns, — a very good outfit for a pirate crew.

And all these bulky riches fell to the portion of twenty-two men, and of Bolton their commander, whom Kidd left behind to man the *Quedagh Mer-*

*chant*. The rest of the crew went on board the *Antonio* with Kidd, and the two vessels sailed out of Curaçoa, keeping company until they reached San Domingo. There they parted, and from that day to this the fate of the *Quedagh Merchant* has been a mystery.

Many rumors were afloat to account for the complete disappearance of the rich East Indiaman. Some said that the pirates cruised for several months among the islands of the Caribbean Sea, and then, after landing their booty, burned the ship. Others declared that Kidd himself sent one of his men to set fire to his great prize, so that not a vestige should remain to testify against him.

But when once fancy was let loose there was no holding her back, and she invented endless exciting stories. The *Quedagh Merchant*, she said, was run daringly into New York harbor, was seen flying at full speed up North River with a British man-of-war at her heels, and was then sunk off the Highlands on the Hudson. Sometimes the story was varied, and the ship was burned to the water's edge. An old Indian from Michigan saw the flames leaping up the rigging and the hull ablaze.

But the old Indian must have been dreaming, for a woman in Lynn was mesmerized, and, while she was in a trance, she saw the vessel lying at the bottom of the river, and in the hold were chests of gold and silver, and little glittering

heaps of diamonds and rubies. But more interesting even than the jewels was Captain Kidd himself, whom she saw leaving the ship. He was a man large, heavily built, of medium height, with broad chest, thick neck, and powerful head. She could even see the flash of his piercing eyes, and the hook of his nose.

All these tales of a phantom ship and a phantom man were fabricated after Captain Kidd had made himself famous by being hung, so we will follow his fortunes in the *Antonio*, when he had separated from his companions and run boldly into the trap that had been laid for him. As usual he wanted to reap the advantages of piracy without becoming an outlaw, and he had no desire to spend the rest of his life a-buccaneering, but wished to return to a career of enriched respectability.

Feeling his way along, he first sailed up the Atlantic coast and ran into Delaware Bay for repairs, in June 1699. Avoiding the armed sloop that had been sent out against him, he next sailed into Oyster Bay, and from there wrote a letter to his wife, and one to Lord Bellomont. He was counting on the protection of the governor, and he put the most plausible face he could on his acts, asking for a safe conduct.

Lord Bellomont was in Boston when he received Kidd's letter, and he sent an evasive answer with the intention of luring him into his toils. If Kidd could prove that he had done nothing unlawful,

he was safe in coming to Boston, so said the governor. Confident, as usual, Kidd thought he could extricate himself, and that the matter would be hushed up ; so he sailed slowly along the coast of Long Island.

At Block Island Mrs. Kidd and the children joined the captain ; and from there Kidd sent on to Lady Bellomont a magnificent gift of jewels worth three hundred thousand dollars, hoping to propitiate his patron. But it was more than gold or diamonds that Lord Bellomont and his colleagues now wanted ; their reputation was at stake, and the price must be the price of blood.

Leisurely stopping along the coast, Captain Kidd made his way to Boston ; and it was this last slow sail of his to his doom that started the stories of his buried treasure. He is said to have landed at dead of night at quiet and solitary places all along the shores of Long Island, of Cape Cod, and on the Sound, with sacks of gold and bags of jewels which he buried in the sands or under rocks.

Mysterious marks were seen on trees and stones, a sort of blazed trail to the secret treasure holes. There is a rocky ledge on Long Island called "Kidd's Ledge," where it was thought that he had hidden large booty. For years and years afterward the lonely spots and wild shores were ransacked and dug with feverish excitement ; every moment the treasure hunters expected to strike a

hard iron chest or lay bare a gleaming pile of jewels ; but the reward never came. If Captain Kidd hid a large part of his plunder, it is still underground.

We shall probably never know whether Thimble Island or Block Island are secreting rich treasures among their crevices, but it is well known that Kidd stopped at Gardiner's Island on his way north, and left some bales and bags of goods in Mr. Gardiner's keeping. He was expecting to call for them again, but he never returned ; for a week after reaching Boston, while he was walking unconcernedly along the street, he was suddenly arrested. Everything that he possessed, or that could be found in the hold of the *Antonio*, was seized, — gold, silver, sugar, and merchandise. And Lady Bellomont surrendered her three hundred thousand dollars' worth of jewels.

Captain Kidd was soon afterward carried to England for his trial. There he found that his case had become notorious. As the partner of the king and of high lords he was the most talked of man in the kingdom. Lords Oxford and Somers had been questioned for their interest in the disgraceful enterprise, and their opponents were trying to make it the means of their downfall. The people took sides for and against the opposite parties : Captain Kidd's piracy had become a political issue.

Under these conditions there was no hope for

the pirate, although his piracy was never proved. He was given the notoriety of a state trial, and was sentenced to death for the murder of Moore, his gunner. It was party rivalry that sent him to the rope's end.

Kidd was executed at the famous Execution Dock, and was hung twice, the first rope breaking with his weight. He was afterward hung in chains over Thames River, six of his men suffering the same fate with him. This was the end of the most famous and the least ferocious of the pirates of our coast.



## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE FOAM OF THE SEA

THE last of the romantic freebooters of the sea were the Chinese Ladrones, the foam and froth of the Southern waters. Piracy seems to have had a strong attraction for the half-civilized peoples of the East: the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, the China Sea, were infested by hordes of water-thieves, Asiatics, Malays, and Mongols. Hundreds of the long, light, pirate-proas ran in and out among the countless fastnesses of the East India Islands and waylaid the traders that sailed on the highway between Europe and Asia.

For three hundred years the Philippine Islands were harassed and raided by the fierce Soolos, some of the most desperate of the Malay pirates whose strongholds were among the small islands of the Malacca Straits. Their brethren, the wild Illanoons, spread their ravages far and wide, from Malacca to the Spice Islands, and all alike were patronized by the great Malay princes who contributed to their outfit and shared their booty.

Raga, the "prince of pirates," a man both shrewd and daring, was the most noted and suc-

cessful of these Malay marauders, and for seventeen years he headed a vast system of sea-robbery, terrorizing the coast of Borneo, and carrying on extensive piratic operations. Even as late as 1831, Captain Endicott of Salem had an exciting experience with the Malay thieves while lying off Qualla Battoo in his ship the *Friendship*.

But the Malay pirates, of cowardly and cautious ways, have nothing in them to interest us, and the only Eastern freebooters with a claim to daring and ability were the Chinese outlaws whose large and well-ordered squadrons held the Southern Sea during a brief but brilliant sway, early in the nineteenth century.

Not that China had waited until recent times to produce her pirates, for, much earlier, during the wars between the Manchus and the Chinese, a powerful and dashing pirate chieftain had held the stage for several years. Koshinga is one of the famous names in Chinese history.

This patriot-hero, who was the son of a wealthy merchant, had command of a large Chinese fleet and became a formidable water-prince. He conquered cities, made descents on the coast, defeated Tartars and Manchus, captured islands, carried off booty, led marauding expeditions, and attempted to establish a principality of his own. His reign was short and vivid and was the rule of one.

Later was formed the great water republic of

the Ladrones. "We are like vapors dispersed by the wind; we are like the waves of the sea, roused up by a whirlwind; like broken bamboo-sticks on the sea, we are floating and sinking alternately, without rest or peace." This picturesque and poetic description of the Chinese pirates was given by one of their most famous leaders, the notorious Chang Paou, commander of the red flag.

It was a strong and united confederacy that ruled over the domain of the water in the first decade of 1800. During their supremacy they were the masters of the Southern Sea. They levied tribute from Chinese trading vessels and from Spanish and Portuguese merchantmen. They terrorized the towns and villages along the whole length of the coast. The inhabitants were dispersed, villages totally destroyed, and the entire seaboard was in confusion.

The dominion of the pirates extended along the coast from Tonquin to Foochow, but their chief base of operations was among the islands at the mouth of Pearl River and in the water channels along the shores of the southern province of Quang-Tung. Here was the meeting ground of the trading vessels from all parts of the world. It was called, "The great meeting from the east and the south," and rich booty fell into the hands of the nimble water-thieves.

Farther out to sea, on a small and secluded island, shunned by all men of peace, was a safe

harbor of refuge for the pirates where they retired between their forays. Steep, high mountains rose abruptly from the shores, and in the rock-bound, hidden harbor a hundred vessels found safe moorings. The island was also a garden of plenty, and produced all that could satisfy the heart of a rover. Fertile valleys and fields spread out from the foot of the mountains. Flowers bloomed in profusion, animals roamed freely through the woods, and fruit ripened on the trees. This was the lair and lurking-place of the robbers; here they repaired their vessels, laid in stores, and prepared for the coming raid.

Six bands or squadrons formed the powerful Republic of the Sea. Each division was led by a separate commander, and fought under a different flag, the red, the yellow, the green, the blue, the black, and the white. Every leader had also a deputy or lieutenant, who commanded smaller squadrons and was responsible to his chief. The "Scourge of the Eastern Sea" was the commander of the yellow flag. The "Lustre of Instruction" led the division of the black. The white flag obeyed the "Jewel of the whole crew," and the green acknowledged the "Frog's meal." At the head of the blue was "Bird and Stone." But of the six squadrons, the red was the most powerful, being the equal in strength and numbers of all the others combined, and it was under the chief command of an able and daring woman

pirate, Mistress Ching, who appointed the notorious Paou as her chief captain.

Mistress Ching was the widow of the chief Ching yih, the usurper, who had come of pirate stock, and had for several years led his squadron in successful ocean cruises. In one of these plundering expeditions, while Ching yih was hovering around the mouth of the Canton River on the watch for prey, he espied a fisher craft running for the shore. With a sudden swoop he was upon her; the boat was captured, and the fisherman and his son Paou, a well-made youth of fifteen, were made prisoners. Paou was a clever and capable boy and found favor with the pirate chief. He soon rose to be Ching's favorite and was made a headman or captain. The quiet Chinese fisher-boy, as he plied his father's trade, had never in his wildest dreams foreseen the life of excitement, of adventure, and of tremendous power that was to be his destiny.

Not long after, the squadron was overtaken by a violent hurricane, and the high waves swept the decks of the pirate junks. Ching, the leader, perished in the storm, and his wife assumed supreme command, making Paou her chief captain or first minister.

Captain Paou was a man born to command. He increased the fleet and enlisted new recruits. He was a strict disciplinarian, politic, energetic, and shrewd, — a dictator in his floating domain.

Realizing that the success and stability of his rule depended upon a united and submissive following, he did everything to bind together the crews and to impose a code of pirate law. He believed in order, regularity, and fair play among thieves. The good of the whole was his watchword.

One of the first acts of his new authority was to issue two regulations which served to keep the wild crews of outlaws in a wholesome state of fear.

“If any man goes privately on shore, or what is called transgressing the bars, he shall be taken and his ears shall be perforated in the presence of the whole fleet ; a repetition of the same act shall be punished by death.”

“Not the least thing shall be taken privately from the stolen and plundered goods. All shall be registered, and the pirate receive for himself, out of ten parts, only two ; eight parts belong to the storehouse, called the general fund ; taking anything out of this general fund, without permission, shall be death.”

Mistress Ching was by no means a figurehead in her realm ; Captain Paou consulted her on all points, and in her capacity as commander-in-chief she laid down rigid rules of conduct. All the booty was regularly entered on the register of the storehouse, and out of this common fund each member received what he was in need of. No private possessions were allowed, and nothing could be done without a written application.

In their filibustering expeditions the fleet was to act as a whole, and no individual was allowed to take separate action. If any man left the line of battle, either to advance or retreat, he could be accused in general council, and if found guilty, he was beheaded. With rigid laws such as these the pirate fleet became a model of order and discipline.

The outlaws, in fact, looked upon themselves more as rebels than as robbers, and their leaders called themselves patriots, not pirates. They also had a convenient and plausible way of referring to their somewhat doubtful commercial transactions as a "transshipping of goods."

Captain Paou was a man of great physical strength as well as mental energy, and his men came to look upon him as a sort of demigod. On one occasion a band of the pirates went ashore and entered a temple that was near the seaboard under the pretence of worshipping before the great image. But their piety was a sham and they desired only to carry off the statue. The men laid hold of it confidently, but to their surprise they could not move it. They pulled and hoisted, but all in vain. Then Captain Paou came to their aid, and he alone was able to raise the heavy image and carry it in triumph to their ships. This filled the crew with a superstitious awe of their commander.

Every squadron was detailed to cruise on a cer-

tain station at the mouth of one of the waterways, and the whole length of the coast was thus divided between the six different flags ; the red flag waved over the eastern shores and rivers. No trading vessels could run the gantlet of their sharp lookouts ; no rich cargoes passed through those well-watched waters that did not fall into the grasp of the marauders and fill their holds. The Chinese government alternated between fear of the pirates, and occasional attempts to suppress them, but in these encounters the freebooters were usually the victors.

Early in September, 1808, the naval officer of the garrison at Bocca Tigris sailed out at the head of an expedition against the squadron of the red. News of the projected attack was brought to Captain Paou by his spies, and the wily pirate had ample time to lay his plans. He prepared an ambush in a sequestered bay. Then he advanced with only a few vessels to decoy the Chinese leader into the trap. The ruse succeeded. Commander Lang pursued the pirate craft into the heart of the treacherous ambushade. Suddenly twenty-five vessels appeared on his rear, and he found himself surrounded by three lines of junks.

He fought with desperation ; time and time again he attempted to break through the line, but failed. The battle lasted from morning till night. Toward the close of the day Captain Paou advanced upon his opponent, and a smart



duel began between the two chiefs. Both were brave, but the pirate was the more wary of the two. When he saw that his antagonist was aiming for him point blank, he dropped suddenly upon the deck at the moment when the gun was fired. Friend and foe thought him to be severely wounded, but when the smoke cleared he rose and stood erect before them all. His followers thought that he was a spirit, and with fresh enthusiasm and fire they threw themselves upon the enemy, grappled the commander's ship, and captured it after a severe struggle. By five o'clock three of the government ships had been sunk or destroyed. Gathering themselves together for a last overwhelming attack the freebooters carried everything before them. The remaining fifteen ships were captured, and Commander Lang, with many others, was taken prisoner.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE SQUADRON OF THE RED

THE signal victory of Captain Paou off the Ladrone Islands inspired the government with fear. The pirates were counted invincible, and the timorous attitude of the naval officers served only to increase this feeling and to strengthen the cause of the rovers. A large addition had also been made to their fleet by the capture of the government vessels. It was therefore with a fatal timidity and hesitation that General Lin, one of the Chinese commanders, weighed anchor and headed out to sea in search of the victorious outlaws. When he sighted them, he was seized with terror. Their ships covered the water like a flock of gulls and appalled him by their numbers.

Instead of bearing down on the enemy whom he had come out to engage, General Lin now hastily gave orders to retreat. The ships turned on their heels and ran for the shore, with the pirates in hot pursuit. The grand attack had become an ignominious flight. After a lively chase Captain Paou came within gunshot of the government ships and opened fire. But this did



The pirates swarmed around their opponents' ships . . . and carried everything with a rush



not satisfy him. His main method of attack was boarding, almost the only way in fact in which he could get possession of his opponents' vessels. At this critical moment the wind died down and a sudden calm fell upon the waters. The pirate ships could not move ; they lay motionless on the glassy surface.

Captain Paou, however, was not the man to be thwarted ; the inventiveness and enterprise of this talented chief seemed endless. He now ordered his men to leap into the sea, and encouraging them by his example, he swam lustily for the enemy. The moving figures made no sure target for the enemy's aim, and the novel mode of attack somewhat disconcerted the regular tars. The pirates swarmed around their opponents' ships, scrambled up the sides, tumbled on to the decks, and carried everything with a rush. Six vessels were boarded and captured, and Captain Paou bore them off in triumph to swell his fleet.

Exasperated at the repeated defeat of her ships, the government resolved to send out a formidable expedition under the command of Admiral Tsuen, for the complete suppression of the pirates. A large fleet of a hundred vessels was fitted out, and weighed anchor early in the year 1809, headed by the flagship of the admiral. Great hopes were placed on this organized attempt, and it was fully expected that the pirates would be wiped out of existence.

But the rovers had in their employ trusted spies who kept them informed of all approaching danger. Being warned of the admiral's movements, Captain Paou formed his line of battle and bore down to meet the enemy. A fierce battle followed ; the firing on both sides was incessant, and the government guns did fatal work. The sails of the pirate craft were made of matting and were extremely inflammable. They were soon set on fire by the rain of shot, and the flames leaped up the ropes and rigging, but Captain Paou ordered the sails to be pulled down in order to save the vessels.

The Chinese admiral then directed the guns to be aimed at the enemy's steering gear in the hope of making the ships helpless. The cross fire of four divisions wrapped the pirates on all sides, but they sturdily stood their ground, and fought with desperation. After inflicting severe damage and heavy loss of life, the government ships hauled off, carrying with them two hundred prisoners.

This was the most serious blow that the pirates had sustained. They had not been defeated or exterminated, but they had received rough handling and lost several vessels. It was a salutary check to the growing over-confidence and conceit that had been bred by the long list of their previous successes.

After this experience they were more careful, and when a second expedition put to sea later in the same year, they were well prepared to give

and not receive a rebuff. It was Admiral Tsuen who again led the attack. The squadron of the red was drawn up in the bay of Kwang Chow and waited for the advance of the opposing line. Mistress Ching, who had taken part in all the adventures of her followers, now assumed supreme command and issued her orders. Captain Paou was to attack the front of the enemy's line with a division of ten ships, while Lieutenant Leang was to round the admiral's line and come upon it from the rear.

Caught between two squadrons the Chinese admiral made a vigorous resistance, and even succeeded in holding the pirates at bay until a reënforcement of the rovers suddenly arrived upon the scene of action. The battle then turned into a rout. The government ships were thrown into disorder, scattered, overpowered, and cut to pieces. A panic seized the crews and every man fought for himself without order or discipline. Amid hopeless confusion the ships broke away and fled. Fourteen were captured, and the rest escaped in a wild stampede.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### A CAPTIVE'S STORY

It so happened that at about this time, when the Ladrones were at the height of their power, an Englishman had the interesting but rather uncomfortable opportunity of studying their methods at first hand. And he afterward wrote an article on his experiences, for he had the good fortune to survive the adventure.

It was in September, 1809, that the East India Company's ship, the *Marquis of Ely*, dropped anchor off the coast of China, some twelve miles from Macao. A cutter was manned with seven well-armed men, and Richard Glasspoole was sent to Macao for a pilot. For the next eleven weeks that boatload of men had an exciting time. Squalls, strong tides, and heavy swells swept them rapidly along the current; the air was thick and hazy, and before long the ship was entirely lost sight of.

The men tried every device. They struck their masts and pulled at the oars; then they set a reefed foresail and mizzen. Nothing was of any avail, and they were fast drifting on to the



jagged rocks of the shore. A Chinese country-ship lying at anchor under the land weighed and slipped away at sight of the strange boat. Not another sail was in sight; the cutter had lost her anchor, and now the only prospect was a shipwreck.

Harder than ever the men pulled, and after five hours of stout rowing they managed to clear the reefs. Then they were cheered by the sight of one of the Company's ships, and they made signals to her with their handkerchiefs at the masthead. Did no one see the little fluttering rags? The ship tacked and stood away from them!

"Our situation was now truly distressing," writes Mr. Glasspoole, "night closing fast, with a threatening appearance, blowing fresh, with hard rain and a heavy sea; our boat very leaky, without a compass, anchor, or provisions, and drifting fast on a lee-shore, surrounded with dangerous rocks, and inhabited by the most barbarous pirates."

That was an anxious night. It was dark, with constant hard squalls and heavy rain. But they close-reefed their sails and kept tack and tack until daylight, so that fortunately they had drifted only a little by morning. The next few days were spent in alternate pulling and sailing, now in dead calms, now in heavy swells. Once they anchored in a secluded bay by lashing six muskets together. But this, of course, made their muskets

useless, and as their ammunition was also wet, they had nothing left but their cutlasses for defence.

Their condition was now hopeless, and Glass-poole decided to take the advice of their Chinese interpreter, who urged them to follow the leeward passage to Macao between the islands and the coast. So the cutter stood in for the inner channel, where the water was smooth and the sailing easy. But they had run from one peril straight into the jaws of another. Before night they had caught sight of several suspicious looking junks, and had lain in hiding close under the land to avoid being seen.

The next morning was clear, and the men were in high spirits, for a pull of two or three hours would carry them to Macao, and their troubles would be over. They were already looking forward to a good meal and dry clothes; they had been drenched by the constant rains, and for three days had eaten nothing but a few green oranges.

After rowing gayly for a couple of miles, they sighted a large fleet of boats at anchor under the opposite shore, — fishing-boats, as their Chinaman confidently declared. This was a chance to get provisions and a pilot to take them to Macao, so they pulled close in shore and hailed one of the boats. But a large rowboat was pulling after them; “soon she came alongside, when about twenty savage-looking villains, who were stowed

at the bottom of the boat, leaped on board." They were the dreaded Ladrones!

The pirates were armed with a short sword in each hand, but seeing that Glasspoole and his men could make no resistance, they sheathed their weapons and dragged their prisoners into their boat, and then on board one of their junks, where the Englishmen were chained to the guns.

Glasspoole was carried on board the chief's vessel and taken into the august presence. The pirate-lord was seated on deck in a large chair, "dressed in purple silk, with a black turban." He was a large, commanding-looking man of about thirty. Question after question was put to the prisoner, but his story that they were Englishmen in distress who had been four days at sea without provisions, was received with doubt and discredit. A large ransom was put on his head, and he was placed under a strict guard.

The first food besides green oranges that Glasspoole had tasted for several days was now put before him, and he made a full dinner on caterpillars boiled with rice. He had a good opportunity to acquire a taste for this new diet, as it was his only ration for three weeks.

While negotiations were pending for a ransom, Glasspoole had the pleasure of assisting at several piratical raids and naval battles. At that time the entire force of the Ladrones amounted to almost seventy thousand men, eight hundred large ves-

sels, and nearly a thousand small ones, under the chief orders of the squadron of the red.

The division of junks that had captured the English cutter evidently belonged to the main squadron, for in the evening they weighed anchor and joined the admiral of the red who was lying with two hundred vessels under the island of Lantow.

At daylight, on the 25th of September, the entire squadron, counting about five hundred sail, got under way and started on a cruise up the rivers. Glasspoole seems not to have especially enjoyed the adventure; he was sailing hundreds of miles up a country never visited by Europeans, there to stay for months, with little chance of ever seeing his own people again. His spirits were at low tide, and he did not appreciate the rare opportunity he was having of studying pirate customs.

As the fleet of the freebooters sailed up river they plundered villages, burnt houses, and laid large towns under contribution. They stopped along the way to collect tribute of money, sugar, rice, and roasted pigs, and when the tribute was not paid they held prisoners and towns at high ransoms. At their approach most of the villagers fled to the hills, leaving everything behind them to be pillaged, and for a month the pirates sailed up and down the rivers collecting booty at the cost of very little fighting.

Late in October, as the fleet was dropping down-

stream, a swift boat arrived with the news that a large mandarin force was on its way up the river to attack the Ladrones. The chief started on ahead at once with fifty vessels, leaving orders for the rest to follow, and a big battle was expected. But after a two hours' fight the Chinese lost five ships, the admiral blew up his own vessel, and the rest, numbering eighty-three sail, fled out to sea.

So far, Glasspoole had been merely a more or less interested spectator; but he was now to take active part and fight for the pirates. It was the first of November; the fleet had sailed up a narrow river and anchored within two miles of a small town. Through an interpreter the pirate chief commanded Glasspoole and his men to clean their muskets and prepare to go ashore. But the Englishmen flatly refused, and even threats of a cruel death failed to move them.

But when the chief promised to accept any sum offered for the ransom, and to give them each twenty dollars for every Chinaman's head they cut off, Glasspoole and his men accepted the proposal with alacrity, and cheerfully served their turn at the great guns.

In the morning a force of about four thousand men was landed, and after a brisk cannonading the wall of the fort fell in. The mandarin vessels, however, which were moored out of reach of the pirate junks, kept up a continuous and annoy-

ing fire. This exasperated the Ladrones, and about three hundred of them swam ashore, with a short sword lashed close under each arm; then they ran along the banks of the river until they were abreast of the vessels, leaped into the water again, swam to the ships, boarded and captured them.

Three days later the pirates sailed for the island of Lantow, where they lay anchored in the bay for several weeks, repairing and careening their junks. The work was almost finished and the ships were in fair fighting trim, when early one morning the lookout descried an immense fleet of mandarin vessels standing for the bay and formed in line of battle.

For nine days the Chinese ships blockaded the pirate squadron and poured in a rain of shot. The Ladrones never returned the fire, but waited for a chance to board, towing out their vessels whenever a calm fell, in the hope of capturing some of the enemy's ships. They did, in fact, bring in one prize without losing any of their own craft, but the damage to their rigging was severe.

Glasspoole had two narrow escapes during the fight from some twelve-pounder shots that came unpleasantly near, but the chief's wife frequently sprinkled him with garlic water, and this was supposed to be an effectual charm against shot.

It was not long after this engagement that a

letter and the ransom arrived from one of the Company's cruisers, and on the 7th of December Glasspoole and his handful of men were despatched in a gunboat to the *Antelope*, where they had the "inexpressible pleasure of arriving," after a captivity of more than eleven weeks.

In his narrative Glasspoole expresses fine scorn for the vaunted Chinese fleets that were sent out to vanquish the pirates. And no wonder, when the officers were paralyzed with fear, and at sight of the famous red squadron stood pale and bewildered, huddled around the flagstaff. Want of order and discipline made them an easy prey, and every defeat only increased the power of the pirates.

The Ladrões had made themselves masters of the sea-coast. They held the land in terror. In the towns consternation reigned. Old men crowded about the doors of the public offices; the government officials were alarmed and held consultations day and night. Placards were nailed up on all public buildings, ordering the troops to hold themselves in readiness to march. All vessels were directed to remain in harbor or to return immediately to port.

These active measures, taken in the hope of starving out the pirates, started a warfare of retaliation. There being no shipping to plunder on the seas, and all trade having been brought to a standstill, the freebooters sailed up the Canton

River and preyed upon the country side. They divided their fleet into four sections, and to each was apportioned a separate district for raiding ; the whole country was surrounded by a cordon ; seaboard and river ways were blockaded.

Villages were burned, provisions plundered, and many poor villagers killed. Large numbers of the peasants fled to the interior ; they abandoned their homes and left everything behind, clothes, cattle, and provisions, to fall a prey to the robbers. Rich booty was collected and stored in the pirate ships, and the depredations spread like a prairie fire. No one knew where or when the dreaded freebooters would appear next. Swiftly and mysteriously they came and went, like "vapor dispersed by the wind," like foam upon the sea. Suddenly their ships loomed in the offing or stole stealthily up-stream. In a few hours they were nowhere to be seen, and the country had been swept as by a hurricane. They were here, there, everywhere. In twelve days eight villages were raided and laid waste.

Skilful and cunning, the pirates had many devices for gaining entrance into the villages and winning the confidence of the people. Their successes were not all won by force ; stratagem was a powerful weapon in their hands. One pirate would come disguised as an officer to take charge of the government guns ; another would come in a government vessel as if to bring assistance to the



village; another pretended to be a pedler and sold his wares in the streets while he gathered information. Then on a sudden there was a signal, a rush, a fierce attack, a bewildered resistance, and the pirates were in possession.

Some of the villagers made a brave stand; they threw up fences and palisades, dragged their big guns behind them, and sometimes met craft with craft. At Tung Kwan they laid an ambuscade and decoyed the pirates into it. Taken by surprise the outlaws were thrown into confusion and fled precipitately. The villagers pursued them to the water's edge, killed a large number, and captured three of their vessels.

But in most cases the brave resistance availed little; the overwhelming numbers of the pirates carried everything before them. Their fleet had increased with their captures, and five hundred vessels now sailed arrogantly up and down the coast under the command of Mistress Ching. The different districts were divided between the squadrons, and their power extended east and west.

Several fierce engagements took place. The inhabitants of one village assembled in force behind their wall and fired upon the advancing line, but the pirates threw themselves upon the ground, and the shots passed harmlessly over their heads. Before the gunners could reload, the pirates sprang up with a wild yell and

stormed the fortifications, driving back the defenders. The people then took refuge in the citadel where a thousand men fought with such desperation that the pirates were forced to withdraw.

The next attack was on the citadel of Lau Shih, where the commanding officer had erected strong defences and was prepared for a plucky resistance. The place was carried, and the government officer killed, but so distinguished had been his bravery that a temple was afterward erected to him, and his memory was yearly honored by a display of fireworks!

Even the wives of the Chinese officers fought valiantly by the side of their husbands, and often fell in battle mortally wounded. Many acts of prowess on the part of both men and women are reported by the Chinese chronicler as having at least shed the light of heroism over those troublesome and bloody times.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE BATTLE OF THE RED AND THE BLACK

THE pirates had now become a serious national pest. Their audacity knew no bounds. They even went so far as to attack the convoy of ships that brought the yearly tribute-money from Siam, and the government officers were driven to make renewed efforts to break their disgraceful bonds.

Toward the close of 1809, Admiral Tsuen mustered about eighty vessels to defend the mouth of the Canton River. Mistress Ching, who was kept well informed of the admiral's movements, issued general orders to her fleet. Every vessel of the different flags was to meet outside the bar and prepare for a night attack. At the first watch the cannon began to boom, and all through the night the roaring of the guns could be heard along the shores. When day dawned the firing ceased, to be renewed again when darkness covered the waters.

The hills behind the villages were thronged with people, who watched the fight with breathless interest. The surf dashed against the rocks, bits of floating wreckage covered the sea; the

air was thick with flying bullets, and the booming of the guns reëchoed dismally from the hills. Birds and beasts started from their coverts in alarm.

On the second night the government squadron was thrown into disorder and overpowered ; four vessels were destroyed, and the admiral set fire to his own ship and perished with all on board rather than fall into the hands of the captors. The pirates were now masters of the outer and inner channels, and advanced up the river. The boat-people — that peculiar and outcast race who live on the water in their floating houses — fled to the towns for refuge, carrying their boats with them. The citizens fortified themselves behind intrenchments. But it was an uneven contest. The pirates prevailed and took everything by storm.

Frequent skirmishes between the pirates and the government fleets, which were often a hundred ships strong, always resulted in the discomfiture of the regular navy ; but the end of the freebooters was near at hand, and their undoing came from within, not from without. What no enemy could accomplish by force was brought about by seditions in their own ranks. There had long been a feud between Captain Paou and the "Lustre of Instruction." The chief of the black flag, racked with jealousy of the powerful leader of the red, would have been glad to see

the ruin of his hated rival. Their mutual respect for Mistress Ching had alone kept them from open hostility. But the moment came when O po tae could do his enemy a bad turn and he took advantage of it.

Captain Paou had collected his forces at a station off the coast, not far from Canton. It was a place favorable for an attack, and Admiral Tsuen promptly laid his plans to surround the pirates and hold them in a trap. Hastily collecting a fleet of a hundred vessels, and aided by some Portuguese ships, he spread out his lines and formed a cordon around the island. For three days and nights the opposing forces fought with energy and with varying success, neither side gaining a decided advantage.

Then Admiral Tsuen called a council of war and laid before it his plan. His proposition was to send to the city of Canton for large reënforcements, and to prepare fire-ships to break up the enemy's line. All the commanders and officers of the fleet were ordered to meet at a prescribed point to form a close blockade of the island and cut off the supplies of provisions and arms. Twenty-five ships were filled with gunpowder, nitre, and other combustibles; they were to be set on fire by a match at the stern.

All the arrangements having been fully carried out, and a land attack planned to make a diversion and deceive the enemy, Admiral Tsuen waited

anxiously for a favorable wind. On the fourth day a fresh breeze sprang up from the northwest, the fire-ships were set adrift on the water, and in a moment were wrapped in a fierce blaze. Slowly they were driven by the wind toward the intrenchments of the pirates, but as they neared the coast the wind suddenly fell; the high mountains of the island had cut off the current.

Although the fire-ships could not reach the land, the pirate vessels were in imminent danger. Two caught fire, and the flames leaped up the sails and rigging. Captain Paou, however, had prepared himself for this attack. Every vessel was provided with long bars, on the end of which were attached great pincers. With these the pirates caught hold of the fire-ships as they approached and shoved them off.

But Captain Paou began to be alarmed at his situation. For the first time in his career he doubted his own strength and ability to withstand the enemy. Knowing that his rival, the leader of the black flag, was at a station not far away, he sent a messenger with orders to O po tae to sail immediately to his relief. Anxiously the pirates scanned the horizon for a friendly sail; hour after hour passed and still no squadron of relief could be descried in the distance. Then the truth began to dawn upon Captain Paou; the squadron of the black had deserted him and left him to his fate; O po tae had deliberately disobeyed

the orders of his chief. Boiling with rage and vowing vengeance on his rival, he determined that if ever he should escape from his present position, he would make the leader of the black feel the full weight of his displeasure.

Captain Paou in his hour of distress now appealed to the "Spirit of the three old Mothers" to prophesy his fate, and he cast lots in the temple. The lots came out against fighting, but strongly in favor of breaking the blockade, and with renewed hope he determined to make the attempt.

The next morning at daylight a southerly wind sprang up, and preparations were eagerly made for a start. All was activity and energy in the harbor; sails were spread and anchors weighed. Toward noon the wind freshened still more, and blew strongly from the south; the waves, too, began to rise, and the sea looked rough and threatening. When darkness fell, the whole pirate fleet was under way. Bearing down full sail on the enemy's line, they dashed through it, and made for the open sea with the loss of only ten leaky boats.

Admiral Tsuen, taken by surprise and being entirely unprepared, had offered only slight resistance, but on the following morning he gathered his fleet together and dashed in pursuit of the pirates. After a search of several days he came upon them and bore down to the attack. The

pirates had spread out their line in a half circle, and now attempted to surround the government fleet. A lively brush of two hours ended in the discomfiture of the freebooters who lost three ships. Captain Paou called his fleet out of action and retreated to sea, but in the dead of night he suddenly returned, roused the enemy from their sleep, fell upon them with vigor, and succeeded in burning two vessels and capturing three.

Having thus disposed of Admiral Tsuen and having no longer any fear of being attacked from that quarter for the present, Captain Paou was eager to reckon his account with the leader of the black squadron. In his anger he cared not that his forces were small and that the larger part of the fleet was cruising under Mistress Ching. He went headlong in pursuit of his rival, found him, upbraided him for his treachery, and fell upon him with reckless haste. But O po tae's squadron was far superior in numbers and was in better condition. His men were fresh, and his ships in good repair.

With heavy odds against him Captain Paou made an energetic onslaught, but he was repulsed and his ships badly damaged. The fight ended in a severe defeat for the squadron of the red, and Captain Paou retreated after having lost sixteen vessels and three hundred men.

The victory of the black was transient. They knew that Captain Paou would return with over-



powering numbers and would sweep them from the sea. They would be one to ten, and their annihilation would be inevitable. Some means must be discovered to thwart this fate, and a general council was held, to consult on what course to adopt. One of the pirates rose and proposed amid much opposition that they should make their submission to the government. Official placards, he declared, had been posted up in all public places, inviting them to surrender, and offering pardon and even recompense. They had fought the mighty squadron of the red, and that would be an added plea for mercy.

O po tae was of the same opinion, and after a heated discussion it was agreed to send a petition to the governor-general. The act of submission was couched in flowery language. It explained at length why this great band of outlaws had adopted the profession of piracy: some had joined the ranks because they could not agree with their relations, others because they could not make a living; some had lost their property, others fled from justice. In this way the numbers had grown to hundreds and thousands, and even to tens of thousands. It was natural that such a multitude in want of their daily bread should resort to plunder; it was from necessity that the laws of the empire had been violated.

After this plausible explanation of piracy, the petition continued in a poetic strain to describe

the uncertainty and danger of the Ladrone's life. In wind, rain, and storm, on river, sea, or land, they must everywhere be prepared to fight. "Whether we went to the east, or to the west, and after all the hardships of the sea, the night dew was our only dwelling, and the rude wind our meal." The petition ended with a final appeal to the compassion of the government toward those who were deserving of death.

The government was overjoyed. The chief officers met together at Canton and under the direction of the governor-general drew up an agreement. The submission of the pirates was accepted with the stipulation that the pirate ships should be assembled in the open sea off the town of Kwei, and the surrender made by O po tae to the governor-general. The conditions were complied with. A hundred and twenty-six vessels, eight thousand men, five hundred large guns, and five thousand six hundred weapons were handed over to the governor. Two towns were apporportioned to the reformed pirates, and their chief was made an officer of inferior rank.

This was the death-knell of piracy on a grand scale in the China seas. The people of the sea-coast rejoiced, and the country began to assume a new appearance. Men "sold their arms and bought oxen to plough their fields"; they burned sacrifices, said prayers on the hilltops, and sang in their houses.

Mistress Ching began to ponder on the chances that the future held in store for her. She was perhaps growing tired of her life of wild adventure and peril. She saw that the leader of the black squadron had been made a government officer and was living in safety and ease. "I am ten times stronger than O po tae," she said to herself, and secretly hoped, no doubt, that her reward would be ten times greater. But still she hesitated. Rumors began to spread, however, that the red squadron was not averse to submission, and the government took advantage of this opening to send an emissary to Captain Paou.

The bold and masterful leader of the red, who had been victorious in scores of fights and had commanded his fleets with brilliant success, was not in favor of meek surrender. After a long and friendly discussion he remained unconvinced. But Mistress Ching had been won over to the side of peace. She recommended submission, and her word was law. Captain Paou agreed to gather his vessels outside the Bocca Tigris and receive the governor.

It was a large array of pirate vessels that collected off the coast, and it required no small amount of courage to trust one's self to their honor. As the governor's boat sailed out to meet them, he was greeted by the hoisting of flags, the firing of guns, and the sound of music. Captain Paou, accompanied by Mistress Ching and other promi-

nent pirate leaders, boarded the governor's ship, and throwing themselves on their knees before him, they implored pardon and protection. This was graciously and only too gladly granted, and, soon after, the pirate ships, laden with pork and wine, were brought into harbor. Those who so wished were allowed to join the military force of the government, the rest could disperse and settle in the country.

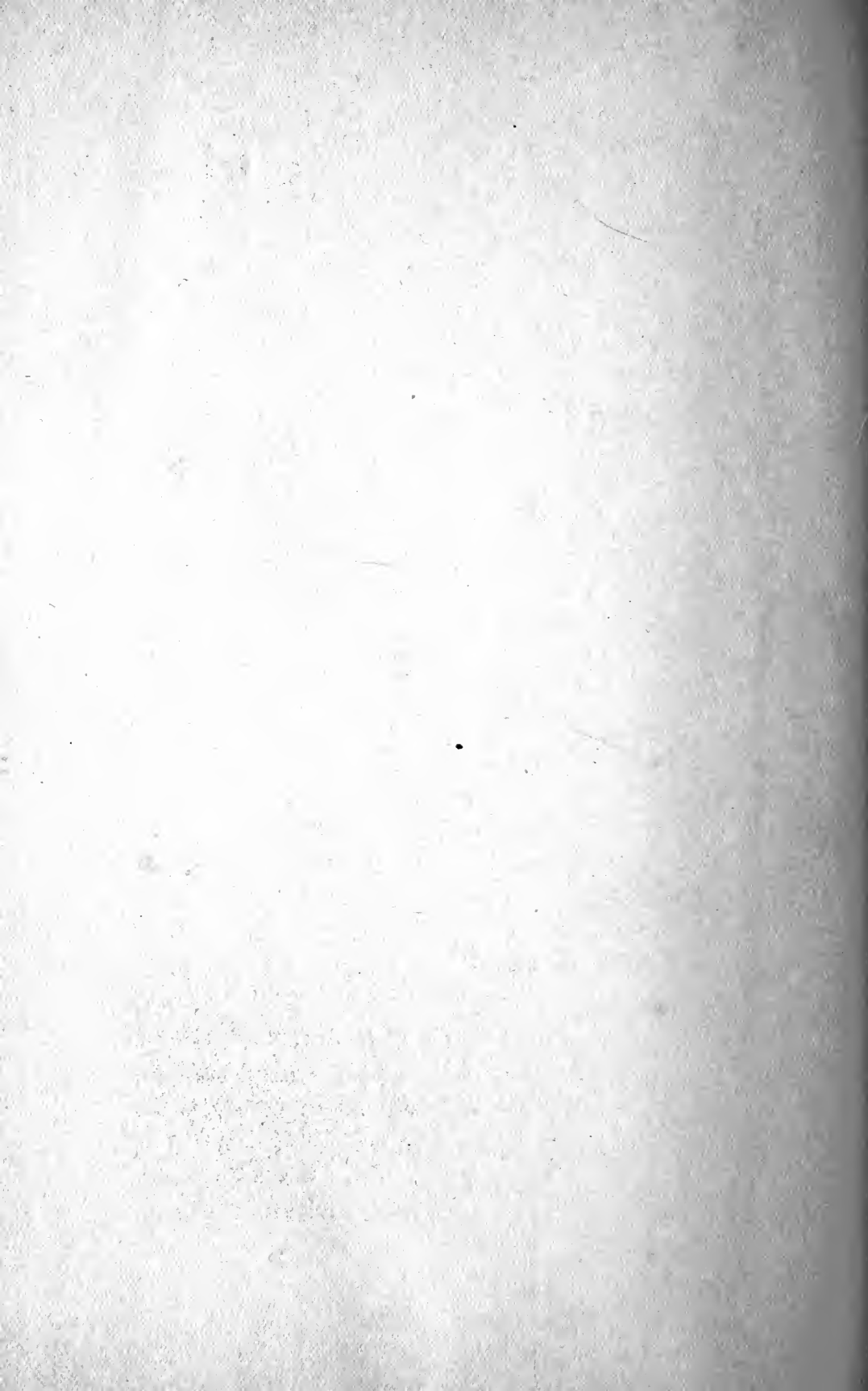
Captain Paou was given the rank of major. Unfortunately the Chinese chronicler does not tell us what became of that resolute pirate queen, Mistress Ching, and we are left in entire ignorance of her fate.

The governor-general, who had been the instrument of this happy submission, was generously rewarded. He was given a title, created a secondary guardian of the Prince, and allowed to wear "peacock's feathers with two eyes."

After the submission of the two powerful squadrons of the red and the black, the remaining pirates were easily subdued or destroyed. The yellow, the green, and the blue were successively vanquished, and the rest gradually swept from off the seas.

"From that period till now ships pass and re-pass in tranquillity. All is quiet on the rivers, the four seas are tranquil, and people live in peace and plenty."

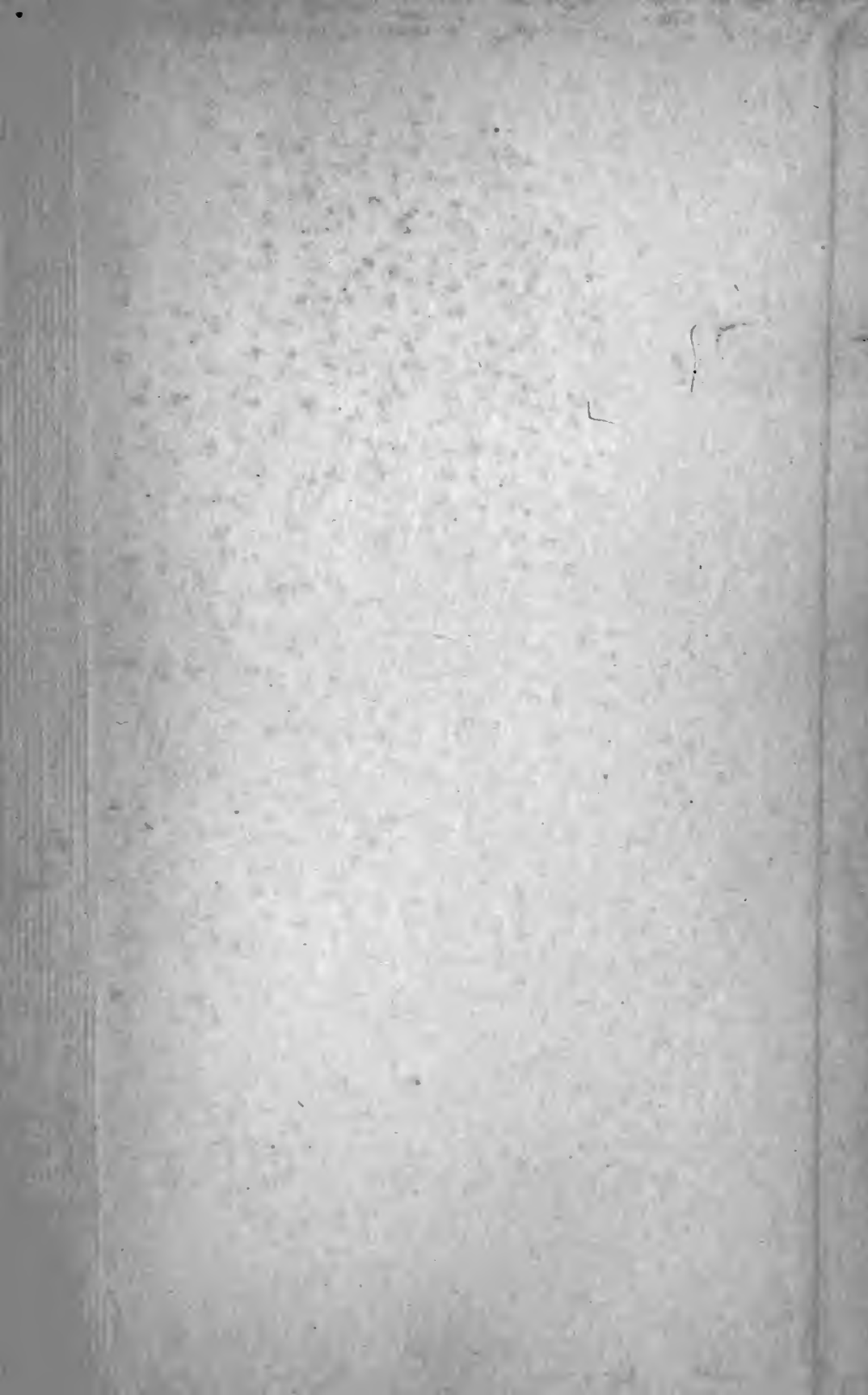






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